


# Child Protection Policy & Procedures

This policy was agreed by governors.

| **Committee** | **Date:** | **Next Review Date:** |
|---|---|---|
| Chair's Action | Autumn 2021 | Autumn 2022 |
| Chair's Action | Autumn 2022 | Autumn 2023 |
| Chair's Action | Autumn 2023 | Autumn 2024 |
| Chair's Action & FGB | Autumn 2024 | Autumn 2025 |
| Chair's Action & FGB | Autumn 2025 | Autumn 2026 |
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Adopted: Au25
Next reviewed: Au26 or if legislation requires

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**Section 1: Introduction**

We are committed to safeguarding children and young people and we expect everyone who works in our schools to share this commitment. All adults in our school take all welfare concerns seriously and encourage children and young people to talk to us about anything that is worrying them.

Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is **everyone's** responsibility. **Everyone** who comes into contact with children and their families has a role to play. To fulfil this responsibility effectively, all practitioners should make sure their approach is child centred. This means that they should consider, always, what is in the **best interests** of the child.

No single practitioner can have a full picture of a child's needs and circumstances. If children and families are to receive the right help at the right time, everyone who comes into contact with them has a role to play in identifying concerns, sharing information and taking prompt action. Contextual safeguarding (safeguarding incidents outside the school) must also be considered when looking at individual cases. All assessments should include this wider picture.

All staff must have read and understood:

- Part 1 of Keeping Children Safe in Education (2025)
- School's Code of Conduct
- Behaviour Policy & Anti Bullying Policy

At Robin Hood Junior School we regularly review local area and school issues and concerns. These are communicated to staff via weekly briefings.

All staff must also be aware of:

- The safeguarding response to children with unexplainable and/or persistent absences from education or who are frequently missing/goes missing from education, home or care
- Pupils with multiple suspensions or at risk of being permanently excluded from school or in alternative provision
- The role of the designated lead (including the identity of the designated leads and any deputies)

School leaders and staff that work directly with children must have also read – Annex A of Keeping Children Safe in Education (2025).

***"THE WELFARE OF THE CHILD IS PARAMOUNT"***

The safety and welfare of our pupils is of the utmost importance, ensuring that they are protected from maltreatment, impairment of their mental and physical health or development and that they are growing up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care to achieve the best outcomes. We have created a culture of vigilance where pupils' welfare is actively promoted. Pupils are listened to and feel safe. We maintain an 'it could happen here' attitude.

We know children learn best when they are healthy, safe and secure, when their individual needs are met and when they have positive relationships with the people caring for them. We aim to have a school which is welcoming, safe and stimulating and where children are able to enjoy learning and grow in confidence. All necessary steps are taken to keep children safe and well.

Because of the day-to-day contact with children, our staff are trained to identify when a pupil may be at risk of harm and abuse and they report their concerns immediately. We have a duty to safeguard and promote the welfare of our pupils under the Education Act 2002 and Children Act 1989/2004 through identifying any child welfare concerns and taking action to address them in partnership with families and other agencies where appropriate.

Children are taught about safeguarding, including sensitive issues and online safety, through various teaching and learning opportunities, as part of providing a broad and balanced curriculum. We use the curriculum to make sure that children and young people understand how people with extreme views share these with others, especially using the internet. All children are taught to recognise when they are at risk and how to get help when they need it.

We are committed to ensuring that our pupils are taught a curriculum that aims to prepare them for life in modern Britain. Teaching the school's core values alongside the fundamental British Values, (of democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty, and mutual respect and tolerance for those of different faiths and beliefs), supports quality teaching and learning, whilst making a positive contribution to the development of a fair, just and civil society.

Relevant issues for schools will be taught through Relationships Education (for all primary pupils) and Health Education (for all pupils in state-funded schools) which are compulsory

from September 2020 and updated in July 2025. Schools have flexibility to decide how they discharge their duties effectively within the first year of compulsory teaching and are encouraged to take a phased approach (if needed) when introducing these subjects.

Please refer to the statutory guidance for more information:

Please refer to the statutory guidance for more information:

Relationships and sex education (RSE) and health education - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)

**Section 2: Purpose and Aims**

We will:

- ✓ Use safe recruitment practice in checking the suitability of all our staff and volunteers to work with children, including the completion of risk assessments.
- ✓ Make sure staff are appropriately trained.

Raise awareness of safeguarding/child protection issues amongst all staff, supply, agency and volunteers and of what to do if they have concerns. This includes raising awareness of any current issues such as:

Child abduction and community safety incidents; Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE); Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE); County lines; Children and the court system; Children missing from education; Children with family members in prison; Cybercrime; Domestic abuse; Homelessness; Mental health; Modern Slavery; Preventing radicalisation & extremism; The Prevent duty; Channel; Sexual violence and sexual harassment between children in school; Serious Violence; So-called 'honour'-based abuse; FGM; Forced marriage (see 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' ,DfE, September 2025.

- ✓ Make sure that volunteers are appropriately supervised.
- ✓ Make sure that our procedures and expectations for identifying and reporting/recording cases, or suspected cases, of abuse to relevant agencies are robust.
- ✓ Make sure that our links with relevant agencies are effective and that we co-operate and work in a partnership regarding child protection matters, including attendance at case conferences and core group meetings.
- ✓ Make sure that our school environment is safe and is one in which children feel secure and are encouraged to talk freely about anything that concerns them.
- ✓ Make sure that children know there are adults in the school who they can approach if they are worried about anything.
- ✓ Ensure that students have a safe space to speak to a trusted adult, where they can raise concerns
- ✓ Make sure that the curriculum and other provision, including opportunities in the RSHE (Relationship, Sex and Health) and PSHE curriculum, develop and equip our

pupils with the skills needed to feel safe and adopt safe practices to help them recognise risks and stay safe from abuse.

- ✓ Make sure that we support pupils who have been abused or may be at risk of harm in accordance with any agreed child protection plan.
- ✓ Make sure that we respond appropriately to any concern or allegation about a member of staff or volunteer.
- ✓ Make sure that staff follow accepted "safe practice" principles when working with pupils.
- ✓ Make sure that pupils are protected from all forms of harm.
- ✓ Create an environment where staff are encouraged and feel confident to self-refer, where, for example, they have found themselves in a situation which could be misinterpreted, might appear compromising to others, and/or on reflection they believe they have behaved in such a way that they consider falls below the expected professional standards.

If there are Child Protection concerns, the **London Child Protection Procedures** (*London Safeguarding Children Partnership, 7th edition updated March 2025* must be followed. This can be found at www.londoncp.co.uk. The Local Safeguarding Children Partnership (LSCP) has adopted these procedures.

In addition to our overarching Safeguarding and Child Protection Policy and Procedures, the following policies; guidance or procedures should also be considered:

Induction, SEND, Pupil Premium, Equality, Health and Safety, Safer Recruitment, Attendance, Behaviour, Anti-bullying, Positive Handling, Intimate Care, Drug and Alcohol, Medical, Healthy Relationships, Data Protection, Whistleblowing, Educational Visits and Online E-Safety (including the use of mobile devices).

**Section 3: Links to other guidance**

**Although this list is not exhaustive, this policy and procedure also accords with:**

- Keeping Children Safe in Education 2025 (publishing.service.gov.uk)
- Working together to safeguard children - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk) – Children's guide now included.
- Early years foundation stage (EYFS) statutory framework - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)
- Children Missing Education - Guidance for Local authorities (publishing.service.gov.uk)
- Education inspection framework (EIF) - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)
- Inspecting schools: guide for maintained and academy schools - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)
- Inspecting further education and skills: guide for providers - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)
- Early years inspection handbook - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)
- The Prevent duty: safeguarding learners vulnerable to radicalisation - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)
- Prevent duty guidance: England and Wales (2023) - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)
- Disqualification under the Childcare Act 2006 - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)

- Information sharing advice for safeguarding practitioners - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)
- What to do if you think a child is being abused (DfE March 2015)
- Section 5B of the Female Genital Mutilation Act (2003) Section 74 of the Serious Crime Act 2015
- Female Genital Mutilation: Resource Pack (Updated February 2023)
- Regulated activity in relation to children (2012)
- Teacher Status Checks (Updated April 2025)
- Child sexual exploitation: definition and guide for practitioners - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)
- Understanding sexualised behaviour in children | NSPCC Learning
- Searching, Screening and Confiscation (publishing.service.gov.uk)
- The designated teacher for looked-after and previously looked-after children (publishing.service.gov.uk)
- Promoting the education of looked-after children and previously looked-after children (publishing.service.gov.uk)
- Criminal exploitation of children and vulnerable adults: county lines (accessible version) - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)
- Data protection: The Data Protection Act - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)
- Data protection in schools - Guidance - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)
- Mental health and behaviour in schools (publishing.service.gov.uk)
- young-people-who-self-harm-a-guide-for-school-staff.pdf (rcpsych.ac.uk)

- Safeguarding children and protecting professionals in early years settings: online safety considerations for managers - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)
- Maintained schools governance guide - Guidance - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)
- Academy trust governance guide - Guidance - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)
- Teaching online safety in schools - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)
- Education for a Connected World (publishing.service.gov.uk)
- Reducing the need for restraint and restrictive intervention - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)
- Relationships and sex education (RSE) and health education - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)
- Positive environments where children can flourish - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)
- Safeguarding and remote education - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)
- When-to-call-police-guidance-for-schools-and-colleges.pdf (governmentevents.co.uk)
- Sharing nudes and semi-nudes: how to respond to an incident (overview) (updated March 2024) - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)
- After-school clubs, community activities and tuition: safeguarding guidance for providers - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)
- Meeting digital and technology standards in schools and colleges - Guidance - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)
- Implementation of the Marriage and Civil Partnership (Minimum Age) Act 2022 - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)
- Working together to improve school attendance - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)
- School suspensions and permanent exclusions - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)
- Improving behaviour in schools - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)
- Gender Questioning Children - non-statutory guidance (education.gov.uk)
- Mobile phones in schools - February 2024 (publishing.service.gov.uk)

Adopted: Au25
Next reviewed: Au26 or if legislation requires

- Alternative provision - GOV.UK
- Artificial Intelligence - DfE Guidance
- Unregistered independent schools and out-of-school settings - GOV.UK
- Out-of-school settings: safeguarding guidance for providers - GOV.UK
- DfE whistleblowing policy - GOV.UK
- Blowing the whistle to the Department for Education - GOV.UK
- Use of reasonable force in schools - GOV.UK
- Children's Wellbeing and Schools Bill
- https://www.gov.uk/government/news/implementation-of-the-marriage-and-civil-partnership-minimum-age-act-2022

**Section 4: Safer Recruitment**

The safe recruitment of staff in schools is the first step to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of the children in education.

In our recruitment and selection of staff and volunteers we will always adhere to the government guidance contained within "*Working Together to Safeguard Children*" (2023) and '*Keeping Children Safe in Education (DfE 2025).*

Updated guidance, including the **Teacher Status Checks**, can be found at: https://www.gov.uk/guidance/teacher-status-checks-information-for-employers.

We will make sure that:

- For good practice, our interview panel includes at least one member who has completed safer recruitment training,
- We always follow up gaps in previous employment,
- We always require specific references from employers for the last 5 years and these are requested before interview
- Shortlisted candidates will be required to complete a declaration that they have no relevant convictions
- For all posts, paid and voluntary, the appropriate Disclosure and Barring Service (DBS) information has been received.
- In addition to obtaining the DBS certificate, anyone who is employed to teach will undergo an additional check to make sure that they are not prohibited from teaching.
- We consider carrying out online checks for shortlisted candidates and have updated our Safer Recruitment Policy to reflect this. This may help identify any incidents or issues that have happened, and are publicly available online, which we might want to explore with the applicant at interview. We will inform shortlisted candidates that online searches may be done as part of due diligence checks.

As a school, we are aware of and take notice of 'Disqualification by Association' guidance (July 2018).

From 1st September 2018, schools no longer have to ask staff questions about cautions or convictions of someone living or working in their household. All staff are reminded annually to make the HT & DSL aware of any personal or home circumstance which could impact their suitability to carry out their role.

The Childcare (Disqualification) and Childcare (Early Years Provision Free of Charge) (Extended Entitlement) (Amendment) Regulations 2018, Part 2 Childcare (Disqualification) Regulations 2018, section 9, states that such a disqualification applies only to 'work in domestic premises'.

A change in law means that Disqualification by Association will only apply on domestic premises. However, Disqualification under the Childcare Act 2006, still applies to staff themselves.

For staff who work in childcare provision or who are directly concerned with the management of such provision, the school makes sure that appropriate checks are carried out to make sure that individuals are not disqualified under the Childcare (disqualification) Regulations.

All staff have a DBS check as they could come into contact with children at any time.

We find out about any staff disqualification from their DBS check and from the Children's Barred List e.g., relevant offences.

We always keep a single central record of all staff with the date and outcome of their DBS check so staff, students and parents can be assured that this has been done.

What is not known from a DBS check is whether a person has a child placed under a care order, whether they have had a childcare registration cancelled or refused for any reason other than non-payment of fees or whether there have been any relevant overseas convictions.

It must be noted that 'relationships and associations' that staff have in school and outside (including online), may have an implication for the safeguarding of children in the school. Where this is the case, the member of staff must speak to the school.

If you do have something to declare or your circumstances change, please seek advice from the Head Teacher. All staff are reminded to do this each September.

For more information, please refer to Part 3 of KCSIE (2025).

**Section 5: Contractors and Outside Agencies**

We expect all contractors providing services within the school whose staff have access to school premises whilst children are on site, to comply with this policy and the attached procedure, as well as the staff code of conduct. The contractor or individual must agree to this in writing.

We require any contractor or organisation delivering a service on behalf of the school or using our premises to provide evidence they adhere to the above requirements in terms of recruitment, selection, training and supervision of their staff and any volunteers, in particular DBS information.

Contractors engaging in regulated activity will require an enhanced DBS certificate (including barred list information). For all other contractors who are not engaging in regulated activity, but whose work provides them with an opportunity for regular contact with children, an enhanced DBS check will be required (not including barred list information).

Under no circumstances will a contractor in respect of whom no checks have been obtained be allowed to work unsupervised or engage in regulated activity.

If a contractor working at a school is self-employed, the school will consider obtaining the DBS check, as self-employed people are not able to make an application directly to the DBS on their own account.

The identity of contractors and their staff will be checked on arrival at the school.

This policy and procedure will also apply to any organisation using school facilities. They must agree to this in writing.

Where the governing body hires or rents out the school facilities/premises to organisations or individuals (for example to community groups, sports associations, and service providers to run community or extra-curricular activities) they will ensure that appropriate arrangements are in place to keep children safe. The governing body will seek assurance that the body concerned has received relevant safeguarding training and that appropriate safeguarding and child protection policies and procedures in place (including inspecting these as needed); and ensure that there are arrangements in place to liaise with the school on these matters where appropriate. The governing body will also ensure safeguarding requirements are included in any transfer of control agreement (i.e., lease or hire agreement), as a condition of use and occupation of the premises; and that failure to comply with this would lead to termination of the agreement.

If school receive allegations about staff using their premises to run activities for children, they should follow their own safeguarding policy, including contacting the LADO.

**For more information on regulated activity:**

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/550197/Regulated_activity_in_relation_to_children.pdf

**Section 6: Site Security**

All people on the site must follow the guidelines within this policy. Laxity can cause potential safeguarding issues to arise. Therefore:

Gates should be locked at playtimes and lunchtimes.

- Never allow anyone to follow you through the gate
- Do not let delivery people through the gate – however impatient they are. The office will admit them.

- All Exit Doors should be closed to prevent intrusion.
- The school will not request DBS checks and barred list checks, or ask to see DBS certificates, for visitors (for example children's' relatives or other visitors attending a sports day). The Head Teacher will use his/her professional judgment about the need to escort or supervise visitors.
- For invited visitors who attend in a professional capacity, their ID will be checked and assurance will be sought that the visitor has had the appropriate DBS check (or that the visitor's employers have confirmed that their staff have appropriate checks).
- Children will only be allowed home with adults with parental responsibility or confirmed permission to leave school with another adult or alone.
- Children should never be allowed to leave school alone during school hours, and if collected by an adult, signed out.
- Should a child leave the school premises without permission then staff have been informed never to *chase* after a child, but rather to report immediately to the office. Then parents and police will be informed of the circumstances. If it is possible to follow a child at a distance to see their direction then staff may do so in order to inform police.
- All visitors are required to sign in at the main school reception where they will be given a visitor's badge. This will be returned to the main school reception on departure.

**Section 7: Data Protection – Information and Records**

The Data Protection Act 2018 and GDPR do not prevent or limit the sharing of information for the purposes of keeping children safe. This includes allowing practitioners to share information without consent.

All staff must maintain records and obtain and share information (with parents, carers, other professionals working with the child, police, social services and Ofsted as appropriate) to make sure safe and efficient management of the school, and to help make sure the needs of all children are met. All staff must enable a regular two-way flow of information between parents and school.

Confidential information and records about children are held securely and only accessible and available to those who have a right or professional need to see them. The Head Teacher is aware of responsibilities under the latest Data Protection Act in England, including those imposed under the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) passed by the European Union. As a school we believe that protecting the data we hold about our children is a fundamental part of our safeguarding process and treats this information with as much importance as protecting the child themselves.

All staff understand the need to protect the privacy of the children in their care as well as the legal requirements that exist to make sure that information relating to the child is handled in a way to make sure confidentiality. Parents and carers are given access to all

records about their child provided that no relevant exemptions (information which could cause harm to the child or any other individual) apply to their disclosure under the DPA.)

The GDPR imposes more stringent requirements on entities that deal with people's personal data. In school, this applies to all personally identifiable information held on staff, children and parents. We are fully committed to ensuring that it upholds the new rights granted to a person under the GDPR. Parents and carers should be aware that there are legal requirements that supersede data protection regulations. The school is required to share data with certain agencies under legal obligations.

For more information:

Information sharing advice for safeguarding practitioners - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)

**Section 8: Definition of Safeguarding and Child Protection**

**Safeguarding:** is about every child and is everyone's responsibility

**Safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children is now defined as:**

- **Providing help and support to meet the needs of children as soon as problems emerge**
- Protecting children from maltreatment, **whether that is within or outside the home, including online**
- Preventing the impairment of children's mental and physical health or development
- Making sure that children grow up in circumstances consistent with the provision of safe and effective care
- Taking action to enable all children to have the best outcome

**Child Protection:** Child protection is part of safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children and is defined for the purpose of this guidance as activity that is undertaken to protect specific children who are suspected to be suffering, or likely to suffer, significant harm. This includes harm that occurs inside or outside the home, including online **(*Working Together to Safeguard Children, December 2023).***

**Section 9: The four main forms of abuse**

**All school staff should be aware that abuse, neglect, exploitation and other safeguarding issues are rarely standalone events that can be covered by one definition or label. In most cases multiple issues will overlap with one another.**

**Abuse:** a form of maltreatment of a child. Somebody may abuse or neglect a child by inflicting harm or by failing to act to prevent harm. Harm can include ill treatment that is not physical as well as the impact of witnessing ill treatment of others. This can be particularly relevant, for example, in relation to the impact on children of all forms of domestic abuse 'including where they (*children*) see, hear or experience its effects'. Children may be abused in a family or in an institutional or community setting by those known to them or, more

rarely, by others. Abuse can take place wholly online, or technology may be used to facilitate offline abuse. Children may be abused by an adult or adults or by another child or children.

**Physical abuse:** a form of abuse which may involve hitting, shaking, throwing, poisoning, burning or scalding, drowning, suffocating or otherwise causing physical harm to a child. Physical harm may also be caused when a parent or carer fabricates the symptoms of, or deliberately induces, illness in a child.

**If in doubt speak to the DSL.**

**Emotional abuse:** the persistent emotional maltreatment of a child such as to cause severe and adverse effects on the child's emotional development. It may involve conveying to a child that they are worthless or unloved, inadequate, or valued only insofar as they meet the needs of another person. It may include not giving the child opportunities to express their views, deliberately silencing them or 'making fun' of what they say or how they communicate. It may feature age or developmentally inappropriate expectations being imposed on children. These may include interactions that are beyond a child's developmental capability as well as overprotection and limitation of exploration and learning or preventing the child from participating in normal social interaction. It may involve seeing or hearing the ill-treatment of another. It may involve serious bullying (including cyberbullying), causing children frequently to feel frightened or in danger, or the exploitation or corruption of children. Some level of emotional abuse is involved in all types of maltreatment of a child, although it may occur alone.

**Sexual abuse:** involves forcing or enticing a child or young person to take part in sexual activities, not necessarily involving violence, whether or not the child is aware of what is happening. The activities may involve physical contact, including assault by penetration (for example rape or oral sex) or non-penetrative acts such as masturbation, kissing, rubbing, and touching outside of clothing. They may also include non-contact activities, such as involving children in looking at, or in the production of, sexual images, watching sexual activities, encouraging children to behave in sexually inappropriate ways, or grooming a child in preparation for abuse. Sexual abuse can take place online, and technology can be used to facilitate offline abuse. Sexual abuse is not solely perpetrated by adult males. Women can also commit acts of sexual abuse, as can other children. The sexual abuse of children by other children is a specific safeguarding issue (also known as child on child abuse) in education and all staff should be aware of it and of the school's policy and procedures for dealing with it

**Neglect:**

The persistent failure to meet a child's basic physical and/or psychological needs, which is likely to result in the serious impairment of the child's health or development. Neglect may occur during pregnancy, for example, as a result of maternal substance abuse.

Once a child is born, neglect may involve a parent or carer failing to:

- Provide adequate food, clothing and shelter (including exclusion from home or abandonment);
- Protect a child from physical and emotional harm or danger;

- Make sure they have adequate supervision (including the use of inadequate caregivers);
- Make sure they have access to appropriate medical care or treatment.
- Make sure they have access to education

It may also include neglect of, or unresponsiveness to, a child's basic emotional needs. **For more information and to access Sutton's Neglect Toolkit (Updated May 2025), please click the link below:**

**Sutton Local Safeguarding Children Partnership - LSCP Policy & Practice (suttonlscp.org.uk)**

**Section 10: Specific Safeguarding Harms**

Safeguarding action may be needed to protect children and learners from specific safeguarding issues such as:

- Body Confidence and Self-Esteem;
- Child abduction and community safety incidents;
- Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE);
- Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE);
- Consent;
- County lines;
- Children and the court system;
- Children who are absent from education;
- Children with family members in prison;
- Cybercrime;
- Dangerous dogs;
- Domestic abuse;
- Homelessness;
- Mental health;
- Modern Slavery and the National Referral Mechanism;
- Preventing radicalisation;
- The Prevent duty;
- Channel;
- Sexual violence and sexual harassment between children in school's and colleges;

- Serious Violence;
- So-called 'honour'-based abuse (including FGM and Forced Marriage)
- FGM;
- FGM mandatory reporting duty for teachers;
- Forced marriage;
- Online Safety – New risks (misinformation, disinformation, conspiracy theories);
- Urban exploring

***Please note this is not an exhaustive list – but are an indicator of some of the key issues of which staff may become aware.***

**See: Appendix A for further safeguarding definitions**

**See: Appendix B for more information:** Keeping children safe in education 2025

**Section 11: Early Help**

Every family can go through difficult or challenging times at some point during their lives. If you are aware of a family that is experiencing problems, they may require support to help them to deal with difficult situations and make things better. Early Help services and support should be offered as soon as a problem or difficulty starts. This is to stop things from getting worse, and to make sure that the family gets the help that they need. The Early Help Assessment Tool (EHAT) is used to find out about the family so that we can understand the difficulties that they may be experiencing. The EHAT is used when a family would like support to help them with a difficulty; when a professional working with a family recognises that they may require extra support; when a family have lots of professionals working with them and services and information needs to be organised to help make things clearer for them, where the needs of the family are unknown or unmet. The EHAT is entirely consent based and the family can decide at any point that they no longer wish to engage with the process. An EHAT is confidential except where there is a risk of serious harm to a child or young person.

**All school staff** should be prepared to identify children who may benefit from **Early Help**. Early Help means providing support as soon as a problem emerges at any point in a child's life, from the foundation years through to the teenage years. In the first instance staff should discuss early help requirements with the DSL. Staff may be required to support other agencies and professionals in an early help assessment.

Any child may benefit from early help, but all school staff should be particularly alert to the potential need for early help for a child who:

- Is disabled or has certain health conditions and has specific additional needs.
- Has special educational needs (whether they have a statutory Education, Health and Care Plan).

- Has a mental health need.
- Is a young carer.
- Is showing signs of being drawn in to anti-social or criminal behaviour, including gang involvement and association with organised crime groups or county lines.
- Is the victim or perpetrator of knife crime
- Has multiple suspensions or is at risk of being permanently excluded from school or is in alternative provision
- Has unexplainable and/or persistent absences from education or is frequently missing/goes missing from education, home or care
- Is at risk of modern slavery, trafficking, sexual or criminal exploitation.
- Is at risk of being radicalised or exploited.
- Has a family member in prison or is affected by parental offending.
- Has family circumstances presenting challenges for the child, such as drug and alcohol misuse, adult mental health issues and domestic abuse.
- Is misusing drugs or alcohol themselves.
- Has returned home to their family from care.
- Is at risk of 'so called honour'-based abuse such as Female Genital Mutilation or Forced Marriage.
- Is a privately fostered child; and
- Is persistently absent from education, including persistent absences for part of the school day.

**For more information, please visit:**

Sutton Local Safeguarding Children Partnership - Helping Early in Sutton (suttonlscp.org.uk)

Targeted Early Help service - Sutton Council

Home | Sutton Information Hub

Commonly asked questions – Cognus

Eligibility Criteria for Targeted Early Help Support in Sutton.docx

**Signposting for families in times of need is vital, especially with the impact of the cost-of-living crisis. For further support please visit:** Together for Sutton - Together for Sutton

**Section 12: Mental Health**

We aim to promote positive mental health and wellbeing for our whole school community; pupils, staff, parents and careers, and recognise how important mental health and emotional wellbeing is. We recognise that children's mental health is a crucial factor in their overall wellbeing and can affect their learning and achievement. Through a whole-school approach, we actively seek to promote emotional health and wellbeing by helping pupils to understand their feelings and the feelings of others.

Our role in school is to help our pupils to succeed and reach their potential by supporting them to be resilient and mentally healthy. We also have a role to make sure that pupils learn about what they can do to maintain positive mental health, what affects their mental health, how they can help reduce the stigma surrounding mental health issues and where they can go if they need help and support.

All staff should also be aware that mental health problems can, in some cases, be an indicator that a child has suffered or is at risk of suffering abuse, neglect or exploitation. If staff have a mental health concern about a child that is also a safeguarding concern, immediate action should be taken by speaking to the DSL or a deputy.

Only appropriately trained professionals should attempt to make a diagnosis of a mental health problem. Staff, however, are well placed to observe children day-to-day and identify those whose behavior suggests that they may be experiencing a mental health problem or be at risk of developing one.

Where children have suffered abuse and neglect, or other potentially traumatic adverse childhood experiences, this can have a lasting impact throughout childhood.

Schools have an important role to play in supporting the mental health and wellbeing of their pupils.

Mental health problems can, in some cases, be an indicator that a child has suffered or is at risk of suffering abuse, neglect or exploitation. Governing bodies and proprietors should make sure they have clear systems and processes in place for identifying possible mental health problems, including routes to escalate and clear referral and accountability systems.

We access a range of advice to help us identify children in need of extra mental health support, this includes working with external agencies.

**If you have a concern regarding the Mental Health of a child, contact your DSL and SENDCo immediately to enable the required support to be put in place as soon as possible.**

**For more information and support: Shout: The UK's free, confidential, 24/7 mental health text service | Shout 85258**

**See: Appendix B for further definitions**

**Section 13: Children Missing in Education (CME) and Elective Home Education (EHE)**

A child **'Missing Education'** is a child of compulsory school age who is NOT a registered pupil at a school and is NOT receiving suitable education otherwise than at a school (e.g., home educated or receiving paid for tuition). For further guidance:

Knowing where children are during school hours is an extremely important aspect of Safeguarding. Children being absent from education for prolonged periods and/or on repeat occasions can act as a vital warning sign to a range of safeguarding issues including neglect, child sexual and child criminal exploitation - particularly county lines. It is important the school or college's response to persistently absent pupils and children missing education supports identifying such abuse, and in the case of absent pupils, helps prevent the risk of them becoming a child missing education in the future. This includes when problems are first emerging but also where children are already known to local authority children's social care and need a social worker (such as a child who is a child in need or who has a child protection plan, or is a looked after child), where being absent from education may increase known safeguarding risks within the family or in the community (KCSIE, 2025).

We monitor attendance carefully and address poor or irregular attendance without delay.

We will always follow up with parents/carers when pupils are not at school. This means we need to have at least two up to date contacts numbers for parents/carers. Parents should remember to update the school as soon as possible if the numbers change.

Please note this is different to children who *leave* the school premises without permission. If this happens, call the police. If it is possible to follow a child to see their direction then staff may do so in order to inform police. Do not chase.

A child on a school roll with attendance concerns, and no reason to off roll to CME, as detailed in Children Missing Education 2024. For advice, please contact attendance@cognus.org.uk .

*'Children missing education are children of compulsory school age who are not registered pupils at a school and are not receiving suitable education otherwise than at a school. Children missing education are at significant risk of underachieving, being victims of harm, exploitation, or radicalisation, and becoming NEET (not in education, employment, or training) later in life'* **(*Children Missing Education, August 2024*).**

**For further guidance:**

Sutton Local Safeguarding Children Partnership - LSCP Protocols (suttonlscp.org.uk)

Children Missing Education - Guidance for Local authorities (publishing.service.gov.uk)

Bitesize Safeguarding Training Videos and Accompanying Slides – Cognus

**In response to the guidance in Keeping Children Safe in Education (2025) the school has:**

- Staff who understand what to do when children do not attend regularly
- Appropriate policies, procedures and responses for pupils who go missing from education (especially on repeat occasions).
- Staff who know the signs and triggers for travelling to conflict zones as well as an awareness of breast-ironing and honour-based abuse (including FGM and forced marriage).
- Procedures to inform the local authority when we plan to take pupils off-roll when they:
    - leave school to be home educated
    - move away from the school's location
    - remain medically unfit beyond compulsory school age
    - are in custody for four months or more (and will not return to school afterwards); or
    - are permanently excluded

We will make sure that pupils who are expected to attend the school but fail to take up the place will be referred to the local authority.

When children are added to the admissions register, the school must record the expected start date of the pupil. If the young person does not arrive on the start date, the school should contact the local authority at the earliest opportunity. For admissions to the school, apart from at the "start of the school's youngest year", schools are required to notify the local authority "within five days when a pupil's name is added to the admission register and provide all the information held within the admission register about the pupil".

When a pupil leaves the school, the admission register must also record:

- The name of the pupil's new school; and
- The expected start date at the new school

The school must inform the local authority and supply the following information:

- The full name of the pupil.
- The full name and address of any parent with whom the pupil lives.
- At least two contact telephone numbers for the child.
- If applicable, the full name and address of the parent with whom the pupil is going to live, and the date the pupil is expected to start living there.
- The name of pupil's destination school and the pupil's expected start date there, if applicable; and

- The grounds under which the pupil's name is to be deleted from the admission register.

If this information is not provided by the parent or carer, then a Child Missing in Education (CME) form is completed and sent to the local authority. Children Missing Education – Cognus

**Elective Home Education**

When a parent/carer expresses their intention to remove a child from school with a view to educating at home, we will make it clear that this is not a decision we are able to recommend. We will liaise with other professionals to coordinate further discussion with parents/carers where possible. This will be particularly important where a child has SEND, is vulnerable, and/or has a social worker. Where the decision to home educate raises safeguarding concerns the DSL (or deputies) will seek further advice from Children's Social Care.

Elective Home Education – Cognus

**Section 14: Attendance - See: Attendance Policy**

School Attendance – Cognus

**Section 15: Children Looked After (CLA)**

The designated lead staff and governors are also responsible for Children Looked After.

All children looked after have a Personal Education Plan (PEP), which is part of the child's care plan. This is reviewed termly. Advice and support are available through the virtual school and virtual head teacher.

The role of the **Virtual School Head (VSH)** now extends to promoting the educational outcomes of:

- Looked-after children (CLA)
- Previously looked-after children
- **Children with a social worker**
- **Children in kinship or informal care arrangements**

The school work closely with the Virtual School to ensure this wider group receives targeted support, has high academic expectations, and benefits from stable education pathways (KCSIE, 2025).

Sutton Virtual School – Cognus

**Section 16: Children Previously Looked After (CPLA)**

The Designated Teacher and Governor for CLA & CPLA are responsible for Children Post Looked-After.

A child post looked after (CPLA) is one who is no longer looked after in England and Wales because s/he is the subject of an adoption, special guardianship or child arrangements order which includes arrangements relating to with whom the child is to live, or when the child is to live with any person, or has been adopted from 'state care' outside England and Wales; and a child is in 'state care' outside England and Wales if s/he is in the care of or accommodated by a public authority, a religious organisation or any other organisation the sole or main purpose of which is to benefit society.

CPLA support arrangements are distinct to those for CLA and are responsive to the needs of the child and family using the appropriate school support systems which will include PPG but not the PEP process.

We aim to help raise the awareness of parents and guardians of CPLA of the PP+ and other support for CPLA this includes encouraging parents of eligible children to tell the school if their child is eligible to attract PP+ funding; and play a key part in decisions on how the PP+ is used to support CPLA.

As a school we recognise that not all CPLA are underachieving, while some may be underachieving and not eligible for funding. We plan to use our funding creatively to support any individual in which any area of under-performance is evident.

Sutton Virtual School – Cognus

**Refer to Pupil Premium Strategy for further information.**

**Section 17: Internet Filtering and Monitoring**

Access to the internet in school is carefully monitored. This is made clear to all users through written statements where access is available, including on information displaying guest wireless access.

Our Internet provider is: LGFL and our internet systems are filtered and monitored through a working combination of LGFL support systems and our experienced and specialist IT Provider.

Internet access is filtered in three groups:

- Staff
- Students
- Staff authenticated

Our internet systems are filtered and monitored through a working combination of LGFL support systems and our experienced and specialist IT Provider.

All staff receive appropriate safeguarding and child protection training (including online safety which, amongst other things**:**

**includes an understanding of the expectations, applicable roles, and responsibilities in relation to filtering and monitoring at induction**.

The training is regularly updated. In addition, all staff should receive safeguarding and child protection (including online safety) updates (for example, via email, e-bulletins, and staff meetings), as required, and at least annually, to continue to provide them with relevant skills and knowledge to safeguard children effectively**For more information please visit:**

https://saferinternet.org.uk/blog/2025-appropriate-filtering-and-monitoring-definitions-published

As outlined in KCSIE 2025, schools must consider the implications of **emerging technologies**, including **generative AI**, when reviewing filtering and monitoring effectiveness. Our safeguarding team and DSL evaluate tools such as ChatGPT, image generators, and large language models to ensure their use aligns with the school's safeguarding framework.

We use the DfE's "Plan Technology for Your School" service to self-assess digital infrastructure, including firewall, filtering, and monitoring tools. Our reviews ensure systems are **effective, age-appropriate**, and **proportionate** without creating unnecessary restrictions on learning.

The Chartered College of Teaching is offering a free certified assessment for school staff to evidence their understanding of artificial intelligence in education. To complete it, teachers and leaders first watch the DfE's guidance and training materials which cover safe, ethical and effective AI use in schools. They then complete an assessment to demonstrate their learning. This is a valuable CPD opportunity for staff developing informed, responsible approaches to AI in education.

Find more information here: https://chartered.college/safe-and-effective-use-of-ai-in-education/

**More information can be found here:**

Artificial Intelligence - DfE Guidance

We fully adhere to meeting the standard set out in the following documents:

Meeting digital and technology standards in schools and colleges - Guidance - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)

Generative artificial intelligence (AI) in education (August 2025)

Support is provided by LGFL to train staff in effective use of the filtering and monitoring systems available. We review the filtering and monitoring standards annually using the links below to support:

DFE Filtering and Monitoring Guidance

**Section 18: Online Safety**

All staff should be aware that technology is a significant component in many safeguarding and wellbeing issues. Children are at risk of abuse and other risks online as well as face to face. In many cases abuse and other risks will take place concurrently, both online and offline. Children can also abuse other children online, this can take the form of abusive, harassing, and misogynistic/misandrist messages, the non-consensual sharing of indecent

images, especially around chat groups, and the sharing of abusive images and pornography to those who do not want to receive such content.

Harm can include ill treatment that is not physical as well as the impact of witnessing ill treatment of others. This can be particularly relevant, for example, in relation to the impact on children of all forms of domestic abuse (KCSIE, 2025).

**Online Safety – New risks (misinformation, disinformation, conspiracy theories)**

Online safeguarding risks increasingly include exposure to **misinformation, disinformation and conspiracy theories**, which may undermine children's trust in adults, promote harmful ideologies, or increase their vulnerability to radicalisation. As part of our digital safeguarding education, pupils and students are taught to critically assess content, verify sources, and report unsafe material (KCSIE, 2025).

**Online Safety Act** – all staff are aware of recent changes.

**Mandatory Age Verification on Pornographic Websites:**

From 25th July 2025, all pornographic websites accessible in the UK must have effective age verification systems in place (such as ID checks or facial age estimation).

**New Offences**

**Cyberflashing** – illegal to send unsolicited sexual images intended to alarm or distress.

**Epilepsy trolling** – criminal to send flashing images aiming to trigger seizures or cause distress.

**Threatening communications** – sending threats of serious harm, death or violence is a standalone offence.

**Encouraging serious self-harm** – offence to promote or encourage self-harm online, even if harm doesn't occur.

**Sharing intimate images (including deepfakes)** – offence to share or threaten to share sexual images without consent, including AI-generated content. For more information please visit: AI CSAM Guides for Professionals | IWF & NCA.

Parents and pupils sign an individual school agreement.

Online safety and the school's approach are supported by this Child Protection Policy and the documents should be considered together.

The school has a clear policy on the use of mobile and smart technology. We are aware that any children have unlimited and unrestricted access to the internet via mobile phone networks (i.e., 3G, 4G and 5G). This access means some children, whilst at school or college, sexually harass their peers via their mobile and smart technology, share indecent images: consensually and non-consensually (often via large chat groups), and view and share pornography and other harmful content.

At Robin Hood Junior School we manage this risk by not allowing internet connected devices on school premises. We follow up incidents occurring outside school and work with parents and other agencies to keep all pupils safe from harm, including when children are accessing 'online learning'.

Children are specifically taught about safe use of the internet. Our policy is not to block everything and only allow children access to certain sites – they need to be taught what is acceptable and what is unacceptable, and what to do when they feel 'uncomfortable'.

When children use the school's network to access the internet, they are protected from inappropriate content by our filtering and monitoring systems. Online safety education is embedded within the curriculum and pupils and students are taught how to use online technology safely and responsibly.

As part of a broad and balanced curriculum, all pupils will be made aware of online risks and taught how to stay safe online.

Through training all staff members will be made aware of the following:

- Pupil attitudes and behaviours which may indicate that they are at risk of potential harm online.
- The procedure to follow when they have a concern regarding a pupil's online activity.

The school will ensure that the use of filtering and monitoring systems does not cause 'over blocking' which may lead to unreasonable restrictions, as to what pupils and students can be taught, regarding online teaching.

Parents, pupils and staff are subject to Acceptable Use of technology Agreements which are regularly revised in line with LGFL guidance. Pupils are not allowed to bring mobile phones into school and are taught about safe use of this technology outside school. Incidents occurring outside school are dealt with in line with our Promoting Positive Behavior Policy.

Children will be kept safe when they are accessing 'online learning' whilst out-of-school as this is delivered via a secure Google Classroom.

As part of a broad and balanced curriculum, all pupils will be made aware of online risks and taught how to stay safe online.

Through training all staff members will be made aware of the following:

Pupil attitudes and behaviours which may indicate that they are at risk of potential harm online.

The procedure to follow when they have a concern regarding a pupil's online activity.

The school will make sure that the use of filtering and monitoring systems does not cause 'over blocking' which could restrict what pupils can be taught.

As schools increasingly work online, it is essential that children are safeguarded from potentially harmful and inappropriate online material, including when they are online at

home. Appropriate filters and appropriate monitoring systems are in place. Where children are being asked to learn online at home, the Department for Education has provided advice to support schools and colleges to do so safely.

**Section 19: Mobile Phone and Camera Safety**

RHJ pupils do not bring mobile phones to school and staff do not use them other than privately in breaks or lunchtimes unless by specific agreement with the Head Teacher. Staff are not permitted to use their mobile phones when teaching or around the pupils in any other way. If permission is given to access a mobile phone during teaching hours or to use it to take photographs,this will be for a specified period or event and all data is transferred to the school system as soon as possible. School mini iPads are available in every year group for this purpose.

**Section 20: Children with Special Educational Needs or Disabilities (SEND) or certain health conditions**

Children with special educational needs or disabilities (SEND) or certain health conditions can face additional safeguarding challenges. Additional barriers can exist when recognising abuse and neglect in this group of children. These can include:

- Assumptions that indicators of possible abuse such as behaviour, mood and injury relate to the child's condition without further exploration.
- These children being more prone to peer group isolation or bullying (including prejudice-based bullying) than other children.
- The potential for children with SEND or certain medical conditions being disproportionally impacted by behaviours such as bullying, without outwardly showing any signs; and
- Communication barriers and difficulties in managing or reporting these challenges

In our school we identify pupils who might need more support to be kept safe or to keep themselves safe. We do this in the following ways:

- Children will have a familiar adult to support with communication through simple language.
- Extra pastoral support is considered for children with SEND.
- Use of visual aids and sign language to support understanding where required.
- Use of a familiar Speech and Language therapist to make sure that questioning and answers are put in a manner accessible to the child.
- Children are carefully monitored and observed to provide a full picture of their behaviour and mannerism so that any changes are noted, and a comparison can be made.
- The use of body maps, visuals and sign language are used to allow children to communicate their needs or concerns.

- The use of social stories is regularly used to support appropriate and inappropriate behaviour – such as bullying and keeping safe.
- Intervention groups teach children how to communicate and explain appropriate and inappropriate behaviour.
- When required to use reasonable force to calm a situation, 'reasonable' means 'using no more force than is needed'. Individual plans for vulnerable children will be drawn up to reduce the use of force.

For further support and guidance: https://suttoninformationhub.org.uk/pages/send-local-offer

**Section 21: Recognition/Signs of Abuse**

The first indication of concern about a pupil's welfare is not necessarily the presence of a serious injury. Many other signs, could be an indication of abuse, these may include:

- Children whose behaviour changes – they may become aggressive, challenging, disruptive, withdrawn, or clingy, or they might have difficulty sleeping or start wetting the bed
- Children with clothes which are ill-fitting and/or dirty
- Children with consistently poor hygiene
- Children who make strong efforts to avoid specific family members or friends, without an obvious reason
- Children who don't want to change clothes in front of others or participate in physical activities
- Children who are having problems at school, for example, a sudden lack of concentration and learning or they appear to be tired and hungry
- Children who change friendships or have relationships with older individuals or groups
- Children who have a significant decline in performance
- Children who show signs of self-harm or a significant change in wellbeing
- Children who show signs of assault or unexplained injuries
- Children who have unexplained gifts or new possessions
- Children who talk about being left home alone, with inappropriate carers or with strangers
- Children who fail reach developmental milestones, such as learning to speak or walk, late, with no medical reason
- Children who are regularly missing from school or home
- Children who are missing from education or have high levels of unexplained absence

- Children who are reluctant to go home after school
- Children with poor school attendance and punctuality, or who are consistently late being picked up
- Parents who are dismissive and non-responsive to practitioners' concerns
- Parents who collect their children from school when drunk, or under the influence of drugs
- Children who drink alcohol regularly from an early age
- Children who are concerned for younger siblings without explaining why
- Children who talk about running away
- Children who shy away from being touched or flinch at sudden movements.

Please note this is not an exhaustive list

**Section 22: Role of the DSL**

It is a matter for individual schools and colleges as to whether they choose to have one or more deputy designated safeguarding leads. Any deputies should be trained to the same standard as the designated safeguarding lead and the role should be explicit in their job description. Whilst the activities of the designated safeguarding lead can be delegated to appropriately trained deputies, the ultimate lead responsibility for child protection, as set out above, remains with the designated safeguarding lead, this lead responsibility should not be delegated.

(See Appendix D for Designated Staff Details)

(See Annex C of KCSIE, 2025 for more information - Keeping children safe in education 2025

Safeguarding is a standing item on all governing board meetings. The designated teacher and designated governor meet termly.

All DSLs should lead on the completion of the annual S175 audit and return all requested information to the LSCP within the given time frame. This is a working document and should be used to inform future action planning and development around safeguarding.

The Designated Safeguarding Lead has a responsibility for Safeguarding and Child Protection – their key role is:

**Manage referrals**

The DSL (or deputies) will refer cases:

- Of suspected abuse and neglect to the local authority children's social care as required and support staff who make referrals to local authority children's social care.

- Where a person is dismissed or left due to risk/harm to a child to the Disclosure and Barring Service as required; and
- where a child is thought to be in immediate danger, to the Police as required.
- https://www.suttonlscp.org.uk/static/guidance_files/Sutton_LSCP_Threshold_Guidance_2021.pdf

The Head Teacher (as Prevent Lead) will refer to the Prevent Lead at the LA where there is a radicalisation concern as required. The HT will keep records of decision making and rationale using My Concern

**Working with others**

The DSL (or deputies) will:

- Act as a source of support, advice and expertise for all staff.
- Act as a point of contact with the safeguarding partners.
- Liaise with the Head Teacher inform him or her of issues- especially ongoing enquiries under section 47 of the Children Act 1989 and police investigations. This includes being aware of the requirement for children to have an Appropriate Adult.
- As required, liaise with the "case manager" and the local authority designated officer(s) (LADO) for child protection concerns in cases which concern a staff member.
- Liaise with staff (especially teachers, pastoral support staff, school nurses, IT Technicians, senior mental health leads and special educational needs coordinators (SENCOs), and Senior Mental Health Leads) on matters of safety and safeguarding and welfare (including online and digital safety) and when deciding whether to make a referral by liaising with relevant agencies so that children's needs are considered holistically.
- Liaise with the senior mental health lead and, where available, the Mental Health Support Team, where safeguarding concerns are linked to mental health.
- Promote supportive engagement with parents and/or carers in safeguarding and promoting the welfare of children, including where families may be facing challenging circumstances.
- Work with the Head Teacher (if not the DSL) and relevant strategic leads, taking lead responsibility for promoting educational outcomes by knowing the welfare, safeguarding and child protection issues that children in need are experiencing, or have experienced, and identifying the impact that these issues might be having on children's attendance, engagement, and achievement at school.
- Remain responsible for safeguarding if a child is placed in Alternative Provision or a Pupil Referral Unit

This includes:

- Ensuring that the school knows who its cohort of children who have or have had a social worker are, understanding their academic progress and attainment, and maintaining a culture of high aspirations for this cohort; and,
- Supporting teaching staff to provide additional academic support or reasonable adjustments to help children who have or have had a social worker reach their potential, recognising that even when statutory social care intervention has ended, there is still a lasting impact on children's educational outcomes.

From June 2021, the Virtual Head Teacher has a responsibility to promote the education of children who have a social worker and regular conversations should be had to share the relevant information and to enable every opportunity for the child to reach their full potential.

**Information sharing and managing the child protection files**

The DSL is responsible for ensuring that child protection files are kept up to date. We use an online reporting and recording system - MyConcern.

Information should be kept confidential and stored securely. Concerns and referrals will be kept in a separate child protection file for each child.

Records will include:

- A clear and comprehensive summary of the concern.
- Details of how the concern was followed up and resolved.
- A note of any action taken, decisions reached and the outcome.

The file will only be accessed by those who need to see it.

Where children leave the school (including in year transfers) the DSL will make sure their child protection file is transferred to the new school or college as soon as possible, and within 5 days for an in-year transfer or within the first 5 days of the start of a new term. The child protection file will be transferred separately from the main student file, ensuring secure transit, and confirmation of receipt should be obtained.

Receiving schools should make sure key staff such as DSL s and SENCOs or the named person with oversight for SEND, are aware as required.

In addition to the child protection file, the DSL will also consider if it would be appropriate to share any additional information with the new school or college in advance of a child leaving to help them put in place the right support to safeguard this child and to help the child thrive in the school or college.

**Raising Awareness**

The DSL (or deputies) will make sure:

- Each member of staff has access to, and understands, the school's child protection policy and procedures, especially new and part-time staff.

- The school's child protection policy is reviewed annually (as a minimum) and the procedures and implementation are updated and reviewed regularly, and work with governing bodies or proprietors regarding this.
- The child protection policy is available publicly and parents and carers are aware of the fact that referrals about suspected abuse or neglect may be made and the role of the school in this.
- They link with the safeguarding partner arrangements to make sure staff are aware of any training opportunities and the latest local policies on local safeguarding arrangements; and
- They help promote educational outcomes by sharing the information about the welfare, safeguarding and child protection issues that children who have or have had a social worker are experiencing with teachers and school leadership staff.

**Training, knowledge and skills**

The DSL (and any deputies) will undergo training to provide them with the knowledge and skills required to carry out the role. The DSL will undertake Prevent awareness training. Training should provide DSL s with a good understanding of their own role, how to identify, understand and respond to specific needs that can increase the vulnerability of children, as well as specific harms that can put children at risk, and the processes, procedures and responsibilities of other agencies, particularly children's social care, so they:

- Understand the assessment process for providing early help and statutory intervention, including local criteria for action and local authority children's social care referral arrangements.
- Have a working knowledge of how local authorities conduct a child protection case conference and a child protection review conference and be able to attend and contribute to these effectively when required to do so.
- Understand the importance of the role the DSL has in providing information and support to children social care to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.
- Understand the lasting impact that adversity and trauma can have, including on children's behaviour, mental health and wellbeing, and what is needed in responding to this in promoting educational outcomes.
- Are alert to the specific needs of children in need, those with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND), those with relevant health conditions and young carers.
- Understand the importance of information sharing, both within the school, and with the safeguarding partners, other agencies, organisations and practitioners.
- Understand and support the school with regards to the requirements of the Prevent duty and are able to provide advice and support to staff on protecting children from the risk of radicalisation.

- Are able to understand the unique risks associated with online safety and be confident that they have the relevant knowledge and up to date capability required to keep children safe whilst they are online at school or college.
- Can recognise the additional risks that children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND) face online, for example, from online bullying, grooming and radicalisation and are confident they have the capability to support children with SEND to stay safe online.
- Obtain access to resources and attend any relevant or refresher training courses; and,
- Encourage a culture of listening to children and taking account of their wishes and feelings, among all staff, in any measures the school may put in place to protect them.

In addition to the formal training set out above, their knowledge and skills should be refreshed (this might be via e-bulletins, meeting other DSL s, or simply taking time to read and digest safeguarding developments) at regular intervals, as required, and at least annually, to allow them to understand and keep up with any developments relevant to their role.

**Providing support to staff**

Training will support the DSL in developing expertise, so they can support and advise staff and help them feel confident on welfare, safeguarding and child protection matters. This includes specifically to:

- Make sure that staff are supported during the referrals processes; and
- Support staff to consider how safeguarding, welfare and educational outcomes are linked, including to inform the provision of academic and pastoral support.

Additional support:

**Additional support:**

Reflective Safeguarding Supervision Offer – Cognus

**https://www.educationsupport.org.uk/resources/for-individuals/videos/teaching-in-2023-how-to-manage-the-emotional-impact/**

**Understanding the views of children**

It is important that children feel heard and understood. Therefore, DSLs should be supported in developing knowledge and skills to:

- Encourage a culture of listening to children and taking account of their wishes and feelings, among all staff, and in any measures the school or college may put in place to protect them; and

- Understand the difficulties that children may have in approaching staff about their circumstances and consider how to build trusted relationships which facilitate communication.

**Holding and sharing information**

The DSL will be equipped to:

- Understand the importance of information sharing, both within the school, and with other schools and colleges on transfer including in-year and between primary and secondary education, and with the safeguarding partners, other agencies, organisations and practitioners.
- Understand relevant data protection legislation and regulations, especially the Data Protection Act 2018 and the UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR); and
- Be able to keep detailed, accurate, secure written records of concerns and referrals and understand the purpose of this record-keeping.
- The most important consideration is whether sharing information is likely to safeguard and protect a child. The Data Protection Act 2018 and GDPR do not prevent, or limit, the sharing of information for the purposes of keeping children safe. This includes allowing practitioners to share information without consent where there is good reason to do so, and that the sharing of information will enhance the safeguarding of a child in a timely manner.

If the DSL is not available, staff should speak to a member of the SLT/take advice from local children's social care and/or contact a member of the Education Safeguarding Team.

**Section 23: The Role of Individual Staff & the Role of Governors**

The Teachers' Standards 2012 state that teachers (which includes Head Teachers) should safeguard children's wellbeing and maintain public trust in the teaching profession as part of their professional duties.

***All school staff have a responsibility to provide a safe environment in which children can learn. All staff should be prepared to identify children who may benefit from early help.***

All members of school staff should be aware of systems within the school which support safeguarding and these will be explained to them as part of staff induction. This includes: the school's child protection policy (including the policy and procedures to deal with child on child abuse); the behaviour policy (including measures to prevent bullying, including cyberbullying, prejudice-based and discriminatory bullying); staff behaviour policy (sometimes called a code of conduct); safeguarding response to children who go missing from education; and the role of the DSL (including the identity of the DSL and any deputies).

All members of school staff will receive appropriate safeguarding and child protection training (including online safety) at induction. The training should be regularly updated. In addition, all staff will receive safeguarding and child protection (including online safety) updates (for example, via email, e-bulletins and staff meetings), as required, and at least annually, to provide them with relevant skills and knowledge to safeguard children effectively.

All members of school staff should be aware of their local early help process and understand their role in it.

All staff should be aware of the process for making referrals to children's social care and for statutory assessments under the Children Act 1989, especially section 17 (children in need) and section 47 (a child suffering, or likely to suffer, significant harm) that may follow a referral, along with the role they might be expected to play in such assessments.

All staff should know what to do if a child tells them he/she is being abused, exploited or neglected. Staff should know how to manage the requirement to maintain an appropriate level of confidentiality. This means only involving those who need to be involved, such as the DSL (or a deputy) and children's social care. Staff should never promise a child that they will not tell anyone about a report of any form of abuse, as this may ultimately not be in the best interests of the child.

All staff should be able to reassure victims that they are being taken seriously and that they will be supported and kept safe. A victim should never be given the impression that they are creating a problem by reporting abuse, sexual violence or sexual harassment. Nor should a victim ever be made to feel ashamed for making a report.

**The Role of Governors**

The Governing Body has strategic leadership responsibility for the school's safeguarding arrangements and must ensure that they comply with their duties under legislation. They must ensure that policies, procedures, and training in the school is effective and always complies with the law.

The Governing Body will appoint a Safeguarding and Deputy to take leadership responsibility for their school's safeguarding arrangements.

The Governing Body will appoint a Governor with responsibility for Filtering & Monitoring.

The Governing Body will ensure that all governors and trustees receive appropriate safeguarding and child protection (including online) training at induction. This training should equip them with the knowledge to provide strategic challenge to test and assure themselves that the safeguarding policies and procedures in place in the school are effective and support the delivery of a robust whole school approach to safeguarding. Their training should be regularly updated.

Whilst considering their responsibility to safeguard and promote the welfare of children and provide them with a safe environment in which to learn, the Governing Body will do all that they reasonably can to limit children's exposure to the above risks from the school's IT system.

As part of this process, the Governing Body should ensure the school has appropriate filters and monitoring systems in place and regularly review their effectiveness. They should ensure that the leadership team and relevant staff have an awareness and understanding of the provisions in place and manage them effectively and know how to escalate concerns when identified.

The Governing Body should consider the age range of the children, the number of children, how often they access the IT system and the proportionality of costs verses safeguarding risks.

**Your Governing Body should make sure that:**

- The designated safeguarding lead (DSL) takes responsibility for understanding the filtering and monitoring systems and processes in place as part of their role (KCSIE 2025).
- All staff understand their expectations, roles and responsibilities around filtering and monitoring as part of safeguarding training (KCSIE 2025).
- Your school's child protection policy includes how your school approaches filtering and monitoring on school devices and school networks (KCSIE 2025).
- Your board should also review the DfE's filtering and monitoring standards. It should discuss with IT staff and service providers what needs to be done to support your school in meeting the standards (KCSIE 2025).

**Section 24: Training**

Induction training is mandatory and must also include:

- Safeguarding and Child Protection policy and procedures.
- Behaviour Policy.
- Staff Code of Conduct.
- Safeguarding response to children who go missing from education; and
- Role of the DSL (including the identity of the DSL and any deputies).

All staff will receive regular safeguarding and child protection updates as required, but at least annually, to provide them with relevant skills and knowledge to safeguard children effectively. All staff also receive training in data protection matters to make sure that they are kept up to date with their duties and obligations to protect information about the children in the school.

Safer Recruitment training is available to all relevant staff and governors who are involved in the recruitment process.

A record is kept of staff training – type of training and dates which is recorded alongside the single central register (SCR)

The SCR is checked regularly by a member of the Senior Leadership Team. Governors are given the assurance that these checks are regularly being carried out and can choose to assist in this process.

**Section 25: Confidentiality of Records**

Our pupils and their parents/carers have the right to expect that all staff will deal sensitively and sympathetically with their situation. It is important that information is only available to those who need to know it. Parents/carers and where appropriate pupils should be told their right to confidentiality may be breached if information comes to light suggesting possible harm to a child. Safeguarding/Child Protection issues relating to individual cases **must not** be subject to open discussion in the staff room or elsewhere in the school.

All personally identifiable information will be kept securely, following the school's obligations under the latest Data Protection Act in England and the General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR) set down by the European Union.

Members of staff should also remember not to promise to pupils to keep "secrets" (*see procedure below*).

**Section 26: Working with Children**

We recognise that children, who are abused, neglected, exploited or who witness these things, may find it difficult to develop a sense of self-worth. They may feel helplessness, humiliation and some sense of blame. The school may be the only stable, secure and predictable element in the lives of children at risk. When at school their behaviour may be challenging and defiant or they may be withdrawn. The school will support pupils and enable them to feel safe through:

- The content of the curriculum.
- The school ethos which promotes a positive, supportive and secure environment and gives pupils a sense of being valued.
- The school behaviour policy which is aimed at supporting vulnerable pupils in the school - the school will make sure the pupil knows that some behaviour is unacceptable, but they are valued and not blamed for any abuse which has occurred.
- Liaison with other agencies that support the pupil such as social services, the child and adolescent mental health service, the borough school attendance service and the educational psychology service; and
- Ensuring that, where a pupil with a child protection plan leaves the school, their information is transferred to any new school immediately and that the social worker is informed.

**Section 27: Allegations involving School Staff/Supply/Agency/Volunteers including 'Low level concerns'**

Allegations or concerns about a member of staff, worker or volunteer must immediately be notified to the Head Teacher (or the Chair of Governors if the concern is about the Head Teacher). This guidance should be followed where it is alleged that anyone working in the school including supply teachers, volunteers and contractors has:

- Behaved in a way that has harmed a child, or may have harmed a child and/or;
- Possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child and/or;

- Behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates he or she may pose a risk of harm to children; and/or
- Behaved or may have behaved in a way that indicates they may not be suitable to work with children.

The Head Teacher (or Chair of Governors) will always consult the Designated Officers (in Sutton, this person is still known as the Local Authority Designated Officer or LADO) within one working day (contactable through the Children and Family Service). The LADO will conduct any investigation, convene a Senior Strategy Meeting and involve other agencies as appropriate

Following consultation, the Head Teacher (or Chair of Governors) will decide on appropriate action, which may include consideration of disciplinary proceedings

It is important to bear in mind that although the concern may relate to an individual student, other students may also be at risk

The school will promote an open and transparent culture in which all concerns about all adults working in or on behalf of the school (including supply teachers, volunteers and contractors) are dealt with promptly and appropriately. This should encourage an open and transparent culture; enable the school to identify concerning, problematic or inappropriate behaviour early; minimise the risk of abuse; and make sure that adults working in or on behalf of the school are clear about professional boundaries and act within these boundaries, and in accordance with the ethos and values of the school.

**Allegations or concerns about an adult working in the school whether as a teacher, supply teacher, other staff, volunteers or contractors**

We recognise the possibility that adults working in the school may harm children, including governors, volunteers, supply teachers and agency staff. Any concerns about the conduct of other adults in the school should be taken to the Head Teacher without delay; any concerns about the Head Teacher should go to the Chair of Governors who can be contacted confidentially by request to the School Office.

Any concerns about the conduct of a member of staff, supply teachers, volunteers or contractors should be reported to the Head Teacher/principal. If school receives allegations about staff using their premises to run activities for children, they should follow their own safeguarding policy, including contacting the LADO (KCSIE, September 2023).

**Keeping Children Safe during Community activities, after school clubs and Tuition Oct 2020**

Keeping Children Safe during Community activities, after school clubs and Tuition

This is non-statutory guidance from the Department for Education (DfE). It aims to help providers of out-of-school settings (OOSS) understand best practice for creating a safe environment for children in their care and give parents and carers confidence that their child is in a safe activity or learning environment.

**Out-of-school settings: safeguarding guidance for providers - GOV.UK**

**After-school clubs, community activities, and tuition - safeguarding guidance for providers**

**Unregistered independent schools and out-of-school settings - GOV.UK**

Concerns may come from various sources, for example, a suspicion; complaint; or disclosure made by a child, parent, or other adult within or outside of the organisation; or as a result of vetting checks undertaken.

**Low Level Concerns**

The Headteacher must decide whether the concern is an allegation or low-level concern, and this should be done in consultation with the LADO. The term 'low-level' concern does not mean that it is insignificant, it means that the behaviour towards a child does not meet the threshold for referral to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) (see below). By having a discussion with the LADO, you are able to get assurance that the necessary action has been taken.

**Allegations**

It is an allegation if the person* has:

- Behaved in a way that has harmed a child, or may have harmed a child and/or;
- Possibly committed a criminal offence against or related to a child and/or;
- Behaved towards a child or children in a way that indicates he or she may pose a risk of harm to children; and/or
- Behaved or may have behaved in a way that indicates they may not be suitable to work with children (also includes behaviour outside the school).

(*Person could be anyone working in the school or a college that provides education for children under 18 years of age, including supply teachers, volunteers and contractors.)

**Allegations should be reported to the LADO 'without delay'.**

Before contacting the LADO, schools and colleges should conduct basic enquiries in line with local procedures to establish the facts to help them determine whether there is any foundation to the allegation, being careful not to jeopardise any future police investigation.

The LADO's role is not to investigate the allegation, but to make sure that an appropriate investigation is carried out, whether that is by the police, children's social care, the school or college, or a combination of these.

**Low-level Concerns**

Concerns may be graded Low-level if the concern does not meet the criteria for an allegation; and the person* has acted in a way that is inconsistent with the staff code of conduct, including inappropriate conduct outside of work.

The procedures in 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' (*DfE, September 2023*), 'Working Together to Safeguard Children' (*HM Government, July 2018 – amended 2023*) and the Sutton Local Safeguarding Children Partnership procedures will be followed in all such cases

Example behaviours include, but are not limited to:

- Being over friendly with children.
- Having favourites.
- Taking photographs of children on their mobile phone without permission being sought from the Head Teacher.
- Engaging with a child on a one-to-one basis in a secluded area or behind a closed door; or,
- Using inappropriate sexualised, intimidating, or offensive language.

If the Head Teacher in any doubt as to whether the information which has been shared about a member of staff as a low-level concern in fact meets the harm threshold, they should consult with their LADO. LA advice is that schools should call the LADO to talk the concern through for support and assurance purposes in all cases.

- You should ensure that your Code of Conduct is clear about what low-level concerns are and why it is important that such concerns are shared.

Robin Hood Junior School has a Staff Code of Conduct which is discussed with staff regularly. It is clear about what low-level concerns are and why it is important that such concerns are shared.

If the concern has been raised via a third party, the Head Teacher should collect as much evidence as possible by speaking:

- Directly to the person who raised the concern unless it has been raised anonymously.
- To the individual involved and any witnesses.

Reports about supply staff and contractors should be notified to their employers, so any potential patterns of inappropriate behaviour can be identified.

Staff should be encouraged and feel confident to self-refer, where, for example, they have found themselves in a situation which could be misinterpreted, might appear compromising to others, and/or on reflection they believe they have behaved in such a way that they consider falls below the expected professional standards.

Low-level concerns should be recorded in writing, including:

- Name* of individual sharing their concerns
- Details of the concern
- Context in which the concern arose
- Action taken

(* if the individual wishes to remain anonymous then that should be respected as far as reasonably possible)

Records must be kept confidential, held securely and comply with the Data Protection Act 2018. Schools and colleges should decide how long they retain such information, but it is recommended that it is kept at least until the individual leaves their employment.

Records should be reviewed so that potential patterns of concerning, problematic or inappropriate behaviour can be identified.

If a concerning pattern of behaviour is identified and now meets the criteria for an allegation, then the matter should be referred to the LADO.

The records' review might identify that there are wider cultural issues within the school or college that enabled the behaviour to occur. This might mean that policies or processes could be revised or extra training delivered to minimise the risk of it happening again.

The procedures in 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' (*DfE, September 2025*), 'Working Together to Safeguard Children' (*HM Government,December 2023* ) and the Sutton Local Safeguarding Children Partnership procedures will be followed in all such cases

When appropriate (*see guidance above*), consideration will be given to referral of a member of staff to the DBS for consideration of the case

If a member of staff believes a reported allegation or concern is not being dealt with appropriately, they should report the matter to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) to give support and direction on how to proceed

**https://www.suttonlscp.org.uk/static/guidance_files/LADO_Protocol_2023.pdf**

https://www.farrer.co.uk/news-and-insights/developing-and-implementing-a-low-level-concerns-policy-a-guide-for-organisations-which-work-with-children2/

- The procedures in 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' (*DfE, September 2025*), 'Working Together to Safeguard Children' (*HM Government, December 2023*) and the Sutton Local Safeguarding Children Partnership procedures will be followed in all such cases.
- When appropriate (*see guidance above*), consideration will be given to referral of a member of staff to the DBS for consideration of the case.
- If a member of staff believes a reported allegation or concern is not being dealt with appropriately, they should report the matter to the Local Authority Designated Officer (LADO) to give support and direction on how to proceed.

**For further training on the role of the LADO:**

Sutton Local Safeguarding Children Partnership - Induction Modules (suttonlscp.org.uk)

**Please also refer to the LADO Protocol:**

Sutton Local Safeguarding Children Partnership - LSCP Protocols (suttonlscp.org.uk)

Adopted: Au25
Next reviewed: Au26 or if legislation requires

**Section 28: Allegations against other children**

If an allegation of abuse is made against other children by children then this must be reported immediately, in accordance with this policy.

This will then be reported to the Children's First Contact Service (CFCS) by a designated person or deputy designated person.

Abuse or concerns about a risk of abuse or harm by other children/young people is subject to the same safeguarding procedures as in respect of children or young people being abused by an adult.

Professionals responding should be alert to the risk a child/young person may pose to children/young people other than any 'current' victim; and

Children or young people who harm others are likely to have considerable needs themselves (e.g., they may have been subjected to abuse, witnessed domestic violence or committed criminal offences).

**Section 29: Whistleblowing**

All staff and volunteers should feel able to raise concerns about poor or unsafe practice and potential failures in the school's safeguarding regime and know that such concerns will be taken seriously by the Senior Leadership Team.

Where there are concerns about the way that safeguarding is carried out in the school, staff should refer to the Whistle-blowing Policy.

A whistleblowing disclosure must be about something that affects the general public such as:

- A criminal offence has been committed, is being committed or is likely to be committed
- A legal obligation has been breached
- There has been a miscarriage of justice
- The health or safety of any individual has been endangered
- The environment has been damaged
- Information about any of the above has been concealed.

Where a staff member feels unable to raise an issue with their employer, or feels that their genuine concerns are not being addressed, other whistleblowing channels may be open to them:

The NSPCC whistleblowing helpline is available as an alternative route for staff that do not feel able to raise concerns regarding child protection failures internally or have concerns about the way a concern is being handled by their school.

Staff can call 0800 028 0285 – line is available from 8:00am to 8:00pm, Monday to Friday or email: help@nspcc.org.uk.

**Section 30: Alternative Provision**

For all pupils and students placed in Alternative Provision (AP), the school must:

- Obtain **written confirmation** from the AP provider that all **safeguarding checks** have been completed.
- Provider must notify the school of any staff changes or risks.
- Keep accurate records of where the child is, including all sites attended.
- Review placements every half-term to ensure safety and suitability.
- Immediately review or end placements if safeguarding concerns arise.

These measures ensure that every child in offsite provision remains safe and receives an education aligned with their needs.

The school will remain responsible for a pupil's welfare during their time at an alternative provider. **(KCSIE, 2025).**

**Section 31: Role of the Responsible Adult**
**Police and Criminal Evidence Act (1984) – Code C**

The Designated Safeguarding Lead (and deputy) are aware of the requirement for children to have an appropriate adult when in contact with Police officers who suspect them of an offence.

PACE states that anyone who appears to be under 18, shall, in the absence of clear evidence that they are older, be treated as a child for the purposes of this Code and any other Code.

PACE also states that if at any time an officer has any reason to suspect that a person of any age may be vulnerable, then that person is entitled to be accompanied by an appropriate adult at any point.

The Designated Safeguarding (or deputy) will communicate any vulnerabilities known by the school to any police officer who wishes to speak to a pupil about an offence they may suspect. This communication will be recorded **on MyConcern**.

If having been informed of the vulnerabilities, the designated safeguarding lead (or deputy) does not feel that the officer is acting in accordance with PACE, they should ask to speak with a supervisor or contact 101 to escalate their concerns.

A person whom there are grounds to suspect of an offence must be cautioned[1] before questioned about an offence[2], or asked further questions if the answers they provide the grounds for suspicion, or when put to them the suspect's answers or silence, (i.e., failure or refusal to answer or answer satisfactorily) may be given in evidence to a court in a prosecution.

A Police Officer must not caution a juvenile or a vulnerable person unless the appropriate adult is present. If a child or a vulnerable person is cautioned in the absence of the appropriate adult, the caution must be repeated in the appropriate adult's presence.

**The appropriate adult' means, in the case of a child:**

1. the parent, guardian or, if the juvenile is in the care of a local authority or voluntary organisation, a person representing that authority or organisation.
2. a social worker of a local authority
3. failing these, some other responsible adult aged 18 or over who is not:
    a. a police officer;
    b. employed by the police;
    c. under the direction or control of the chief officer of a police force; or
    d. a person who provides services under contractual arrangements (but without being employed by the chief officer of a police force), to assist that force in relation to the discharge of its chief officer's functions,

Further information can be found in the statutory guidance - PACE Code C 2019.

https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/pace-code-c-2019/pace-code-c-2019-accessible

**Section 32: Child Protection Procedures**

**When a child discloses, or you are aware there is a safeguarding issue**

***Do not delay***

Tell the DSL as soon as you can. All staff have a MyConcern login or easy access to pink forms and concerns should be recorded and reported this way. If a concern is urgent mark it High priority and **also advise the DSL or deputy DSL in person**.

It may be necessary to interrupt a meeting or lesson to do this – do not leave notes in the DSL 's pigeonhole as they may not get back to check their post until the end of the day once the pupil has gone home.

[1] The police caution is: *"You do not have to say anything. But it may harm your defence if you do not mention when questioned something which you later rely on in Court. Anything you do say may be given in evidence."*

[2] A person need not be cautioned if questions are for other necessary purposes, e.g.: (a) solely to establish their identity or ownership of any vehicle; to obtain information in accordance with any relevant statutory requirement; in furtherance of the proper and effective conduct of a search, e.g. to determine the need to search in the exercise of powers of stop and search or to seek co-operation while carrying out a search; or to seek verification of a written record.

Early referral gives more time to offer help to the pupil and family before the situation becomes more serious.

When the matter is already severe or serious, early referral gives more time for others to protect the pupil.

The DSL may consult the Children's First Contact Service (CFCS).

***Make written notes***

**In Summary**

- Receive – listen to what the student wants to tell you
- Reassure – that they are believed, and their concern will be followed up
- React – ask open questions and then speak to the DSL
- Record – make a written record of the conversation and pass it to the DSL
- Refer – via the DSL and using the local referral process

It is important to remember that students may not find it easy to tell staff about their abuse verbally. Children can show signs or act in ways that they hope adults will notice and react to. In some cases, the victim may not make a direct report. For example, a friend may make a report, or a member of school or college staff may overhear a conversation that suggests a child has been harmed or a child's own behaviour might indicate that something is wrong. If staff have any concerns about a child's welfare, they should act on them immediately rather than wait to be told.

At the earliest opportunity make a written record of your concerns, using a MyConcern report or Pink concern form, these can then be added to our online reporting system - record facts accurately and do not express opinion - these notes will help to make sure accuracy in recalling events later - notes should be legible, signed and dated/time.

Do not take photographs of any physical injuries, record on a body map. Do not use audio to record disclosures.

Any original notes must be given to the DSL as soon as possible and kept, even if you are using an online reporting system.

**Concern from something the child says**

**Listen** - do not ask questions or interrogate. Consider interpreting services if English is a second language.

**Remain calm** - if you are shocked, upset or angry the pupil will sense this, and this could stop them from saying more.

**Reassure** - the pupil has done nothing wrong - tell them it is alright to talk.

**Do not promise to keep it secret** - tell the pupil you cannot keep the matter secret and will need to take advice from someone who can help.

**Referral Process**

Any member of staff can make a referral to the Children's First Contact Service (CFCS) or the Police, but they should always consult the DSL wherever possible.

The designated staff may contact the Children's First Contact Service (CFCS) to make a referral or take advice or contact the child's social worker (if allocated.)

If staff are concerned that the child or family involved have been exposed to radicalisation or extremist behaviour, then they will make a Prevent referral. The referral form for Prevent can be found here:

Statutory Prevent Duty - Sutton Council

**Remember**

- ✓ **If in doubt, consult.**
- ✓ **Do not ignore concerns, even if these are vague.**
- ✓ **The first responsibility of staff is to the pupil.**
- ✓ **If you need help or support to manage your own feelings, this can be provided.**

**Contact with the family**

Contact with the family **should always** be discussed with the DSL, who may consult the Children's First Contact Service (CFCS) or the Education Safeguarding Team.

In cases where a minor physical injury causes concern, then the school's policy for dealing with accidents should be followed. If the explanation suggests a non-accidental cause for the injury (or a failure to protect the pupil from harm), advice must be taken immediately from the Children's First Contact Service (CFCS).

In cases of possible neglect or emotional abuse, the concern may have built up over a period of time. There may have been discussion previously between school staff and the family about sources of help, but if concerns persist, the DSL will need to refer to the Children's First Contact Service and will normally advise the family of this unless specifically told otherwise.

**In cases where there are suspicions of sexual abuse or physical chastisement, the Designated Safeguarding Lead will unpick with the child first and then seek immediate advice from the Children's First Contact Service before discussing this with the family.**

**Recording**

Where there are concerns about a pupil, our safeguarding system has an appropriate flag to indicate concern. Quick notes are used on SIMs to alert office staff to the need to refer to a DSL.

All records relating to child welfare concerns will be kept on the pupil's child protection file and the file will be kept secure - a chronology of concern will be kept by the DSL;

Written records of any concerns about pupils are kept, even where there is no need to refer the matter immediately.

Information from records will only be accessed on a "need to know" basis; access is strictly controlled by the DSL.

Key staff will need to know when a pupil is subject to a Child Protection Plan, so they can monitor the pupil's welfare.

Records relating to the pupil's welfare will remain on the pupil's file as long as the pupil is a pupil at the school.

When the pupil leaves the school, the new school will be informed that the school's records contain information about child protection concerns even where these are no longer current. Records should be sent to the new school in a way that is lawful in terms of data protection requirements.

Records will be kept until the child is 18 years old by primary schools and 25 years old for secondary schools.

**Working with other agencies**

All school staff have a legal duty to assist local authority Children's Social Care or the Police when they are making enquiries about the welfare of pupils.

Information about a pupil must therefore be shared on a "need to know" basis with other agencies.

When telephone requests for information are received, ***always*** maintain security by checking the telephone number listing for the caller and calling back to a switchboard number ***before*** giving information or confirming the pupil is on the school roll. Where agencies are working remotely and may be using mobile numbers, these should be checked by referring to emails or to the team manager.

Always advise the DSL about such requests for information. Requests for attendance at meetings about individual pupils (e.g., child protection conferences) should be notified to the DSL, who will arrange preparation of a report and attendance at the meeting.

Reports should contain information about the child's:

- Academic progress
- Attendance
- Behaviour

- Relationships with children and adults
- Family
- Any other relevant matter.

Reports should be objective, distinguishing between fact, observation, allegation and opinion.

Unless you specify otherwise, reports will normally be made available to the pupil's family.

**Pupils subject to a Child Protection Plan**

The DSL will be told by the relevant local authority when a pupil is subject to a Child Protection Plan.

The name of the key social worker must be clearly recorded on the pupil's record.

The school will participate fully in the work of Core Groups for these pupils, to assist with the objectives of the Child Protection Plan for the pupil.

When a pupil is subject to a Child Protection Plan, the school will report all unexplained absences even if only of a day.

When a pupil is subject to a Child Protection Plan, the school will report all behavioural changes or other concerns to the key social worker; and

When a pupil who is subject to a Child Protection Plan leaves the school, all the child protection information will be transferred to any new school.

**Child's need for a social worker**

Local authorities should share the fact a child has a social worker, and the DSL should hold and use this information so that decisions can be made in the best interests of the child's safety, welfare, and educational outcomes. This should be considered as a matter of routine. There are clear powers to share this information under existing duties on both local authorities and schools and colleges to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.

Where children need a social worker, this should inform decisions about safeguarding (for example, responding to unauthorised absence or missing education where there are known safeguarding risks) and about promoting welfare (for example, considering the provision of pastoral and/or academic support, alongside action by statutory services).

Where a child has a social worker – all staff should be aware that this means they may be more vulnerable than other children.

**All staff must observe the above policy and procedure at all times. They will be reviewed annually and as required in line with changes in local (LSCP) or national guidance.**

**Appendix A**

**Section 33: Definitions of Specific Safeguarding Issues**

**Body Confidence and Self-Esteem**

**Promoting positive body image and self-esteem is crucial for safeguarding children's wellbeing, as it can help prevent negative mental health outcomes like depression and eating disorders. By fostering a culture of self-acceptance and resilience, children can develop a healthy relationship with their bodies and build confidence in their overall self.**

**For more information please visit:**

**Home - SEED | Eating Disorders Support Service %**

**Bullying**

Bullying may be defined as deliberately hurtful behaviour, usually repeated over a period of time, where it is difficult for those bullied to defend themselves. It can take many forms, but the four main types of bullying are: physical (e.g. hitting, kicking, theft), verbal (e.g. racist or homophobic remarks, threats, name calling), social (e.g. isolating an individual from the activities, lying and spreading rumours, damaging someone's reputation and carrying out acts behind a person's back to cause humiliation) and cyber (e.g. sending abusive or hurtful texts, emails, posts, images or videos, deliberately excluding others online, spreading gossip or rumours and imitating others online or using their log-in details).

**Child Abduction and Community Safety Incidents**

Child abduction is the unauthorised removal or retention of a minor from a parent or anyone with legal responsibility for the child. Child abduction can be committed by parents or other family members; by people known but not related to the victim (such as neighbours, friends and acquaintances); and by strangers.

Other community safety incidents in the vicinity of a school can raise concerns amongst children and parents, for example, people loitering nearby or unknown adults engaging children in conversation.

As children get older and are granted more independence (for example, as they start walking to school on their own) it is important they are given practical advice on how to keep themselves safe. Many schools provide outdoor-safety lessons run by teachers or by local police staff.

It is important that lessons focus on building children's confidence and abilities rather than simply warning them about all strangers. Further information is available at: **www.actionagainstabduction.org/** and **www.clevernevergoes.org**.

**Children who are lesbian, gay, bisexual, or gender questioning**

**IMPORTANT NOTE** This section remains under review, pending the outcome of the gender questioning children guidance consultation, and final gender questioning guidance documents being published. Schools should ensure they are using the guidance on (KCSIE 2025) page 56.

A child or young person being lesbian, gay, or bisexual is not in itself an inherent risk factor for harm, however, they can sometimes be targeted by other children. In some cases, a child

who is perceived by other children to be lesbian, gay, or bisexual (whether they are or not) can be just as vulnerable as children who are.

However, the Cass review identified that caution is necessary for children questioning their gender as there remain many unknowns about the impact of social transition and children may well have wider vulnerabilities, including having complex mental health and psychosocial needs, and in some cases additional diagnoses of autism spectrum disorder and/or attention deficit hyperactivity disorder.

It recommended that when families/carers are making decisions about support for gender questioning children, they should be encouraged to seek clinical help and advice. When parents are supporting pre-pubertal children, clinical services should ensure that they can be seen as early as possible by a clinical professional with relevant experience.

As such, when supporting a gender questioning child, schools should take a cautious approach and consider the broad range of their individual needs, in partnership with the child's parents (other than in the exceptionally rare circumstances where involving parents would constitute a significant risk of harm to the child), including any clinical advice that is available and how to address wider vulnerabilities such as the risk of bullying. Schools should refer to our Guidance for Schools and Colleges in relation to Gender Questioning Children, when deciding how to proceed.

Risks can be compounded where children lack trusted adults with whom they can be open. It is therefore vital that staff endeavour to reduce the additional barriers faced and create a culture where they can speak out or share their concerns with members of staff.

**For more information please visit:**

**Child Exploitation Awareness Microsite**

Child Exploitation Awareness

Moving money | The Children's Society

**Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE) and Criminal Exploitation (CCE)**

Both CSE and CCE are forms of abuse and both occur where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child into sexual or criminal activity. Whilst age may be the most obvious, this power imbalance can also be due to a range of other factors, including gender, sexual identity, cognitive ability, physical strength, status and access to economic or other resources. In some cases, the abuse will be in exchange for something the victim needs or wants and/or will be to the financial benefit or other advantage (such as the increased status of the perpetrator or facilitator). The abuse can be perpetrated by individuals or groups.

**Child Sexual Exploitation (CSE)**

CSE occurs where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, manipulate or deceive a child into sexual activity (a) in exchange for something the victim needs or wants, and/or (b) for the financial advantage or increased status of the perpetrator or facilitator. The victim may have been sexually exploited even if the sexual activity appears consensual. CSE does not always involve physical contact; it can also occur

through the use of technology. CSE can affect any child or young person (male or female) under the age of 18 years, including 16- and 17-year-olds who can legally consent to have sex. It can include both contact (penetrative and non-penetrative acts) and non-contact sexual activity and may occur without the child or young person's immediate knowledge (e.g., through others copying videos or images they have created and posted on social media).

**Child Criminal Exploitation (CCE)**

CCE is where an individual or group takes advantage of an imbalance of power to coerce, control, manipulate or deceive a child into criminal activity (a) in exchange for something the victim needs or wants, and/or (b) for the financial or other advantage of the perpetrator or facilitator and/or (c) through violence or the threat of violence. The victim may have been criminally exploited even if the activity appears consensual. CCE does not always involve physical contact; it can also occur through the use of technology.

CCE can include children being forced to work in cannabis factories, being coerced into moving drugs or money across the country (county lines), forced to shoplift or pickpocket, or to threaten other young people.

**For more information please visit:**

**Child Exploitation Awareness Microsite**

Child Exploitation Awareness

Moving money | The Children's Society

**County Lines**

County lines is a term used to describe gangs and organised criminal networks involved in exporting illegal drugs (primarily crack cocaine and heroin) into one or more importing areas (within the UK), using dedicated mobile phone lines or other form of 'deal line'.

Exploitation is an integral part of the county lines offending model with children and vulnerable adults exploited to move (and store) drugs and money. Offenders will often use coercion, intimidation, violence (including sexual violence) and weapons to make sure of the compliance of victims. Children can be targeted and recruited into county lines in a number of locations including schools, further and higher educational institutions, pupil referral units, special educational needs schools, children's homes and care homes. Children are often recruited to move drugs and money between locations.

**Defining County Lines:**

Further information on the signs of a child's involvement in county lines is available in guidance published by the **Home Office and The Children's Society County Lines Toolkit For Professionals**

Evaluation of the County Lines Programme - GOV.UK

**Dangerous Dogs**

The benefits of owning pets are well established. Having a pet can have physical and emotional benefits for a child as well as teaching them about responsibility and caring for living creatures. However, in recent years a number of children and adults have been seriously injured or have died from attacks by dogs, and it is important therefore that professionals working with children and families are aware of the issues around dangerous dogs and the risks they can pose to children and young people.

**For more information please visit:**

PG11. Dangerous Dogs and Safeguarding Children

**Female Genital Mutilation (FGM)**
Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) refers to procedures that intentionally alter or cause injury to the female genital organs for non-medical reasons. The practice is illegal in the UK. FGM typically takes place between birth and around 15 years old; however, it is believed that most cases happen between the ages of 5 and 8.

The Serious Crime Act 2015 sets out a duty on professionals (including teachers) to notify police when they discover that FGM appears to have been carried out on a girl under 18. The duty does not apply in relation to at risk or suspected cases.

Sutton FGM Booklet.pdf (suttonlscp.org.uk)

**So-called 'honour-based' abuse (including FGM and forced marriage)**

So-called honour-based abuse encompasses crimes which have been committed to protect or defend the honour of the family and/or the community, including Female Genital Mutilation (FGM), forced marriage, and practices such as breast ironing. All forms of so-called honour-based violence are abuse (regardless of the motivation) and should be handled and escalated as such. Where staff are concerned that a child might be at risk of honour-based abuse, they must contact the DSL as a matter of urgency.

**In addition, since February 2023 it has also been a crime to carry out any conduct whose purpose is to cause a child to marry before their eighteenth birthday, even if violence, threats or another form of coercion are not used. As with the existing forced marriage law, this applies to non-binding, unofficial 'marriages' as well as legal marriages.**

**Radicalisation and Extremism**

Children may be susceptible to extremist ideology and radicalisation. Similar to protecting children from other forms of harms and abuse, protecting children from this risk should be a part of a schools or colleges safeguarding approach.

**Extremism** [147] is the vocal or active opposition to our fundamental values, including democracy, the rule of law, individual liberty and the mutual respect and tolerance of different faiths and beliefs. This also includes calling for the death of members of the armed forces.

**Radicalisation** [148] refers to the process by which a person comes to support terrorism and extremist ideologies associated with terrorist groups.

**Terrorism** [149] is an action that endangers or causes serious violence to a person/people; causes serious damage to property; or seriously interferes or disrupts an electronic system. The use or threat **must** be designed to influence the government or to intimidate the public and is made for the purpose of advancing a political, religious or ideological cause.

[147] As defined in the Government's Counter Extremism Strategy **www.gov.uk/government/publications/counter-extremism-strategy**.
[148] As defined in the Government's Prevent Duty Guidance for England and Wales. **www.gov.uk/government/publications/prevent-duty-guidance/revised-prevent-duty-guidance-for-england-and-wales**
[149] As defined in the Terrorism Act 2000 (TACT 2000) **www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2000/11/contents**

Although there is no single way of identifying whether a child is likely to be susceptible to an extremist ideology, there are **possible indicators** that should be taken into consideration alongside other factors and contexts. Background factors combined with specific influences such as family and friends may contribute to a child's vulnerability.

Similarly, radicalisation can occur through many different methods (such as social media or the internet) and settings (such as within the home).

However, it is possible to protect people from extremist ideologies and intervene to prevent those at risk of radicalisation being drawn to terrorism. As with other safeguarding risks, staff should be alert to changes in children's behaviour, which could indicate that they may be in need of help or protection. Staff should use their judgement in identifying children who might be at risk of radicalisation and act proportionately which may include the designated safeguarding lead (or a deputy) making a Prevent referral.

Although not a cause for concern on their own, possible indicators when taken into consideration alongside other factors or context may be a sign of being radicalised.

**The Prevent duty**

All schools and colleges are subject to a duty under section 26 of the Counter-Terrorism and Security Act 2015 (the CTSA 2015), in the exercise of their functions, to have "due regard [150] to the need to prevent people from being drawn into terrorism". [151] This duty is known as the Prevent duty.

The Prevent duty should be seen as part of schools' and colleges' wider safeguarding obligations. Designated safeguarding leads (and deputies) and other senior leaders in schools should familiarise themselves with the revised **Prevent duty guidance: for England and Wales**, especially **paragraphs 57-76**, which are specifically concerned with schools (and also covers childcare). Designated safeguarding leads (and deputies) and other senior leaders in colleges should familiar themselves with the **Prevent duty guidance: for further education institutions in England and Wales**. The guidance is set out in terms of four general themes: risk assessment, working in partnership, staff training, and IT policies.

The school's or college's designated safeguarding lead (and any deputies) should be aware of local procedures for making a Prevent referral.

[150] According to the Prevent duty guidance 'having due regard' means that the authorities should place an appropriate amount of weight on the need to prevent people being drawn

into terrorism when they consider all the other factors relevant to how they carry out their usual functions.
[151] "Terrorism" for these purposes has the same meaning as for the Terrorism Act 2000 (section 1(1) to (4) of that Act).

All staff will undertake Prevent awareness training.

**To note:**

**Martyn's Law and Protective Security**

Martyn's Law – formally the Terrorism (Protection of Premises) Act 2025 – is named in memory of Martyn Hett, one of the 22 people killed in the 2017 Manchester Arena bombing. The law introduces new duties to help reduce harm from terrorist attacks. All UK schools, including early years, primary, secondary and further education, are classed as 'standard tier' premises and have two years to prepare before enforcement begins in 2027.

**For more information please visit:**

Martyn's Law Factsheet – Home Office in the media

**Further resources:**

**Further resources:**
Educate Against Hate - Prevent Radicalisation & Extremism
The Prevent duty: safeguarding learners vulnerable to radicalisation - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)
Prevent duty self-assessment tool for schools - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)
Prevent duty training - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)
Prevent duty guidance - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)

**What Prevent is and how to respond**

https://youtu.be/XnLOAVF5Nm8?feature=shared
**More information can be found here including the Sutton Prevent Roadmap:**

Commonly asked questions – Cognus

**Child on Child Abuse/Harms**

The procedures in place to minimise the risk of Child-on-Child Abuse are contained in the Behaviour Policy.

The systems in place (and they should be well promoted, easily understood and easily accessible) for children to confidently report abuse, knowing their concerns will be treated seriously.

Allegations of Child-on-Child Abuse will be recorded in MyConcern, investigated by SLT, and dealt with according to the relevant policies.

Victims, perpetrators and any other children affected by Child-on-Child Abuse will be supported in line with the policy.

**(KCSIE 2025, Part 5 sets out how schools and colleges should respond to reports of sexual violence and sexual harassment).**

Staff should be aware that safeguarding issues can manifest themselves via Child on Child abuse/harm. This is most likely to include, but not limited to:

- bullying (including cyberbullying, prejudice-based and discriminatory bullying).
- abuse in intimate personal relationships between peers.
- physical abuse such as hitting, kicking, shaking, biting, hair pulling, or otherwise causing physical harm (this may include an online element which facilitates, threatens and/or encourages physical abuse).
- sexual violence, such as rape, assault by penetration and sexual assault; (this may include an online element which facilitates, threatens and/or encourages sexual violence).
- sexual harassment, such as sexual comments, remarks, jokes and online sexual harassment, which may be standalone or part of a broader pattern of abuse.
- causing someone to engage in sexual activity without consent, such as forcing someone to strip, touch themselves sexually, or to engage in sexual activity with a third party. For more information around consent please visit: Talk Consent • Specialist Consent Education for Schools
- consensual and non-consensual sharing of nudes and semi nudes images and or videos (also known as sexting or youth produced sexual imagery).
- up skirting, which typically involves taking a picture under a person's clothing without their permission, with the intention of viewing their genitals or buttocks to obtain sexual gratification, or cause the victim humiliation, distress or alarm; and
- initiation/hazing type violence and rituals (this could include activities involving harassment, abuse or humiliation used as a way of initiating a person into a group and may also include an online element).

**Abuse is abuse and should never be tolerated or passed off as "banter" or "part of growing up" as this can lead to a culture of unacceptable behaviours and an unsafe environment for children.**

Child on Child abuse/harm can be a one-off serious incident or an accumulation of incidents. It can involve physical, emotional or sexual abuse. Child on Child abuse/harm involves someone who abuses a 'vulnerability' or power imbalance to harm another and have the opportunity or be in an environment where this is possible. While perpetrators of Child on Child abuse/harm pose a risk to others, they are often victims of abuse themselves.

We recognise that even if there are no reported cases of Child on Child abuse, such abuse may still be taking place and is simply not being reported.

We recognise that it is more likely that girls will be victims and boys' perpetrators, but that all Child on Child abuse is unacceptable and will be taken seriously

In cases where nudes or semi-nudes have been shared, we follow guidance given to schools and colleges by the UK Council for Internet Safety (UKCIS): Sharing nudes and semi-nudes (March 2024)

At Robin Hood Junior School we have procedures in place to minimise the risk of Child on Child abuse.

- All staff receive training in recognising and dealing with Child on Child abuse
- Pupils are supported in understanding what behaviour is acceptable and how to raise concerns
- Adults listen to pupils' concerns and follow them up
- Adults communicate to make sure concerns are not dismissed.
- Allegations of Child on Child abuse will be recorded, investigated and dealt with in line with the behaviour policy.
- Victims, perpetrators and any other children affected by Child on Child abuse will be supported.

KCSIE 2025 and the separate guidance 'Sexual violence and sexual harassment between children in schools and colleges' sets out how schools and colleges should respond to reports of sexual violence and sexual harassment.

**Up skirting** Voyeurism (Offences) Act 2019
The Voyeurism (Offences) Act, which is commonly known as the Up-skirting Act, came into force on 12th April 2019. Up skirting typically involves taking a picture under a person's clothing (not necessarily a skirt) without their permission or knowledge, with the intention of viewing their genitals or buttocks (with or without underwear) to obtain sexual gratification, or cause the victim humiliation, distress or alarm. It is a criminal offence. Anyone of any gender, can be a victim.

**Private Fostering**
The phrase 'private fostering' is often misunderstood. There is local authority fostering and fostering by private agencies. However, in law 'Private Fostering' is quite different.

From a safeguarding perspective, many private fostering arrangements are 'hidden' and, it appears, are rarely brought to the attention of local authorities, even though it is an offence not to inform them. The penalty for non-reporting is a maximum £5,000 fine, but it seems that convictions are extremely rare.

**What is Private Fostering?**
A private fostering arrangement is one that is made privately (without the involvement of a

local authority (or a private sector agency)) for the care of a child under the age of 16 years (under 18, if disabled) by someone other than a parent or close relative, in their own home, with the intention that it should last for 28 days or more. (*Close family relative is defined as a 'grandparent, brother, sister, uncle or aunt' and includes half-siblings and step-parents; it does not include great-aunts or uncles, great grandparents or cousins).

The local authority should be notified of the arrangement, at least six weeks before it starts and not to do so is a criminal offence.

Once the local authority has been notified, children's services have a duty to visit and speak to the child, the parent and the foster carer; and everyone in the foster carer's household. Children's services will then undertake a range of suitability checks including DBS checks on everyone in the household over the age of 16.

Sutton Local Safeguarding Children Partnership - Private Fostering (suttonlscp.org.uk)

**Overseas Students**
If an overseas student under the age of 16 (or under 18 if disabled) stays with a host for 28 days or more, there is a legal requirement for the host, guardianship agency, language school, agent, or other person or company involved in placing the student, to inform their local authority.

**Breast Ironing**
Breast Ironing is practised in some African countries, notably Cameroon. Girls aged between 9 and 15 have hot pestles, stones or other implements rubbed on their developing breasts to stop them growing further. Breast Ironing is usually carried out by mothers or other women to protect girls from men. It is believed that the reason they carry out this procedure is to reduce the risk of sexual harassment, rape, kidnap and forced marriage. Indicators that Breast Ironing has been carried out are chest pains or other discomfort, changes in behaviour and fear of undressing.

**Consent**

Consent is about having the freedom and capacity to choose. Consent to sexual activity may be given to one sort of sexual activity but not another.

Consent can be withdrawn at any time during sexual activity and each time activity occurs

• a child under the age of 13 can never consent to any sexual activity

• the age of consent is 16

• Sexual intercourse without consent is Rape

**For more information please visit:**

Talk Consent • Specialist Consent Education for Schools

**Disguised Compliance**
Parents who appear to cooperate to avoid professionals getting too close or asking too many questions. There is a tendency by professionals to confuse participation with

cooperation. Indicators include parents that put little effort into making changes, limited improvement despite significant input, conflicting views of child and parent, parents align with certain professionals and only engage with part of the plan. The risks of disguised compliance are that cases may drift and lack focus, significant issues may be missed, risks may increase, cases may be closed too early and the child remains at risk of harm. It is important to keep an open mind, use an investigative approach and effective questioning. As professionals we must look beyond the obvious.

**Hidden Children**

Children who do not attend school can become hidden, which means that we are less able to help and protect them. Some of these children may experience risks within their family, such as abuse and neglect. There may also be risks outside their family, such as radicalisation or exploitation. Protecting children from these external risks is known as contextual safeguarding. Children who do not attend school may be at further risk of not achieving their educational potential. They may not be able to access formal education or employment in the future if they have not gained recognised qualifications. They will also not benefit from the role that schools play in developing children's skills to participate fully and constructively in society.

**So which children are we talking about?**

Children not attending school nor on a school roll, including children who have been excluded both on a permanent or an informal basis and for whom no suitable alternative provision is arranged.

Children who fall under the heading 'educated at home', but may not be receiving effective, efficient and suitable education or any education. This includes some children who may not be known to their local authority (LA) or any agencies.

Children attending unregistered schools, sometimes under the guise of being electively home educated.

Children in alternative provision that is of insufficient quality or is not provided for the required hours.

Children without a school place in LAs in which the protocols are not working well enough for hard-to-place children.

**Children and the court system**

Children are sometimes required to give evidence in criminal courts, either for crimes committed against them or for crimes they have witnessed. This may have an impact on them in a number of different ways and they may need emotional support.

**Children with family members in prison**

Approximately 200,000 children have a parent sent to prison each year. These children are at risk of poor outcomes including poverty, stigma, isolation and poor mental health. This may have an impact on them in a number of different ways and they may need emotional support.

**Domestic Abuse**

Domestic abuse can encompass a wide range of behaviours and may be a single incident or

a pattern of incidents. That abuse can be, but is not limited to, psychological, physical, sexual, financial, or emotional. Children can be victims of domestic abuse. They may see, hear, or experience the effects of abuse at home and/or suffer domestic abuse in their own intimate relationships (teenage relationship abuse). All of these can have a detrimental and long-term impact on their health, well-being, development, and ability to learn.

In April 2021, the Domestic Abuse Act 2021 received Royal Assent and introduced a statutory definition for the first time.

Definition:

The Domestic Abuse Act 2021 (Part 1) defines domestic abuse as any of the following behaviours, either as a pattern of behaviour, or as a single incident, between two people over the age of 16, who are 'personally connected' to each other:

(a) Physical or sexual abuse;

(b) Violent or threatening behaviour;

(c) Controlling or coercive behaviour;

(d) Economic abuse (adverse effect of the victim to acquire, use or maintain money or other property; or obtain goods or services); and

(e) Psychological, emotional or other abuse.

People are 'personally connected' when they are, or have been married to each other or civil partners; or have agreed to marry or become civil partners. If the two people have been in an intimate relationship with each other, have shared parental responsibility for the same child, or they are relatives.

The definition of Domestic Abuse applies to children if they see or hear, or experience the effects of, the abuse; and they are related to the abusive person.

The definition can be found here:
https://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/2021/17/part/1/enacted

Types of domestic abuse include intimate partner violence, abuse by family members, teenage relationship abuse and child/adolescent to parent violence and abuse. Anyone can be a victim of domestic abuse, regardless of sexual identity, age, ethnicity, socio-economic status, sexuality or background and domestic abuse can take place inside or outside of the home.

**Advice on identifying children who are affected by domestic abuse and how they can be helped is available at:**

Local domestic abuse services - sutton.gov.uk

Sutton DASS - Cranstoun

Not Alone in Sutton

National Domestic Abuse Helpline:

Refuge runs the National Domestic Abuse Helpline, which can be called free of charge and in confidence, 24 hours a day on 0808 2000 247. Its website provides guidance and support for potential victims, as well as those who are worried about friends and loved ones. It also has a form through which a safe time from the team for a call can be booked.

**Operation Encompass:**

In May 2024, the Victims and Prisoner's Act received Royal Assent. This places a statutory duty on all police forces in England and Wales to participate in Operation Encompass.

**Operation Encompass** operates in all police forces across England. It helps police and schools work together to provide emotional and practical help to children. The system ensures that when the police are called to an incident of domestic abuse, where there are children in the household who have experienced the domestic incident, the police will inform the key adult (usually the designated safeguarding lead (or a deputy) in school before the child or children arrive at school the following day. This ensures that the school has up to date relevant information about the child's circumstances and can enable immediate support to be put in place, according to the child's needs. Operation Encompass does not replace statutory safeguarding procedures. Where appropriate, the police and/or schools should make a referral to local authority children's social care if they are concerned about a child's welfare. More information about the scheme and how schools can become involved is available on the Operation Encompass website.

Operation Encompass provides an advice and helpline service for all staff members from educational settings who may be concerned about children who have experienced domestic abuse. The helpline is available 8AM to 1PM, Monday to Friday on 0204 513 9990 (charged at local rate).

**Operation Encompass is currently under review in Sutton.**

**Homelessness**
Being homeless or being at risk of becoming homeless presents a real risk to a child's welfare. Indicators that a family may be at risk of homelessness include household debt, rent arrears, domestic abuse and anti-social behaviour, as well as the family being asked to leave a property.

The Homelessness Reduction Act 2017 places a new legal duty on English councils so that everyone who is homeless or at risk of homelessness will have access to meaningful help including an assessment of their needs and circumstances, the development of a personalised housing plan, and work to help them retain their accommodation or find a new place to live.

**Fabricated or Induced Illness**
Fabricated or induced illness (FII) is a rare form of child abuse. It occurs when a parent or carer, usually the child's biological mother, exaggerates or deliberately causes symptoms of illness in the child.

**Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs)**

1 in 3 diagnosed mental health conditions in adulthood are directly related to adverse childhood experiences. ACEs can include maltreatment, violence and coercion, adjustment, prejudice, family adversity, inhumane treatment, adult responsibilities and bereavement and survivorship. If you have witnessed or experienced any of the following before the age of 18 you have suffered an adverse childhood experience: domestic violence, sexual abuse, alcohol abuse, physical abuse, parental separation, drug abuse, verbal abuse, mental ill-health or imprisonment.

**Protective factors:**

- ✓ Positive and supportive family
- ✓ Safe relationships with peers
- ✓ Access to a supportive community
- ✓ Ability to regulate emotions
- ✓ Acquisition of problem-solving skills
- ✓ Compassionate, professional response
- ✓ Early intervention from services
- ✓ Trauma-informed systems

When talking to someone who has suffered an ACE, don't ask, what is wrong with you? But, what has happened to you?

**Trauma and Attachment**

A significant number of children are exposed to traumatic life events. A traumatic event is one that threatens injury, death, or the physical integrity of self or others and also causes fear, terror, or helplessness at the time it occurs. Traumatic events include sexual abuse, physical abuse, domestic violence, community and school violence, medical trauma, car accidents, acts of terrorism, war experiences, natural and human-made disasters, suicides, and other traumatic losses.

If a child has experienced trauma they are likely to develop other related behaviours.

These include:

- the development of new fears
- separation anxiety (particularly in young children)
- sleep disturbance, nightmares
- sadness
- loss of interest in normal activities
- reduced concentration

- decline in schoolwork
- anger
- somatic complaints
- irritability

**Contextual Safeguarding**

All staff, but especially the designated safeguarding lead (and deputies) should consider whether children are at risk of abuse or exploitation in situations outside their families. Extra-familial harms take a variety of different forms and children can be vulnerable to multiple harms including (but not limited to) sexual abuse (including harassment and exploitation), domestic abuse in their own intimate relationships (teenage relationship abuse), criminal exploitation, serious youth violence, county lines, and radicalisation.

Contextual Safeguarding is an approach to understanding, and responding to, young people's experiences of significant harm beyond their families. It recognises that the different relationships that young people form in their neighbourhoods, schools and online can feature violence and abuse. Parents and carers have little influence over these contexts, and young people's experiences of extra-familial abuse can undermine parent-child relationships.

Therefore, children's social care practitioners, child protection systems and wider safeguarding partnerships need to engage with individuals and sectors who do have influence over/within extra-familial contexts, and recognise that assessment of, and intervention with, these spaces are a critical part of safeguarding practices. Contextual Safeguarding, therefore, expands the objectives of child protection systems in recognition that young people are vulnerable to abuse beyond their front doors.

All staff should be aware that safeguarding incidents and/or behaviours can be associated with factors outside the school or college and/or can occur between children outside of these environments. All staff but especially the DSL (and deputies) should consider whether children are at risk of abuse or exploitation in situations outside of their families. Extra-familial harms take a variety of different forms and children can be vulnerable to multiple harms including (but not limited to) sexual exploitation, criminal exploitation and serious youth violence.

**To access Sutton's NEET Protocol, please click on the link below:**

Sutton Local Safeguarding Children Partnership - LSCP Protocols (suttonlscp.org.uk)

**Serious Violent Crime**

All staff should be aware of the indicators, which may signal children are at risk from, or are involved with serious violent crime. These may include increased absence from school, a change in friendships or relationships with older individuals or groups, a significant decline in performance, signs of self-harm or a significant change in wellbeing, or signs of assault or unexplained injuries. Unexplained gifts or new possessions could also indicate that children have been approached by, or are involved with, individuals associated with criminal networks or gangs and may be at risk of criminal exploitation.

All staff should be aware of the range of risk factors which increase the likelihood of involvement in serious violence, such as being male, having been frequently absent or permanently excluded from school, having experienced child maltreatment and having been involved in offending, such as theft or robbery. Advice for schools and colleges is provided in the Home Office's Preventing youth violence and gang involvement and its Criminal exploitation of children and vulnerable adults: county lines guidance.

**Modern Slavery**

Modern Slavery and the National Referral Mechanism Modern slavery encompasses human trafficking and slavery, servitude and forced or compulsory labour. Exploitation can take many forms, including: sexual exploitation, forced labour, slavery, servitude, forced criminality and the removal of organs. Further information on the signs that someone may be a victim of modern slavery, the support available to victims and how to refer them to the NRM is available in the Modern Slavery Statutory Guidance. Modern slavery: how to identify and support victims - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)

**Cyber Crime**

Cybercrime is criminal activity committed using computers and/or the internet. It is broadly categorised as either 'cyber-enabled' (crimes that can happen off-line but are enabled at scale and at speed on-line) or 'cyber dependent' (crimes that can be committed only by using a computer).

Cyber –enabled crimes include:

- Fraud,
- Purchasing of illegal drugs on-line
- Child sexual abuse and exploitation
- And other areas of concern such as on-line bullying or general on-line safety.

Cyber-dependent crimes include:

- Unauthorised access to computers (illegal 'hacking'), for example accessing a school's computer network to look for test paper answers or change grades awarded;
- Denial of Service (Dos or DDoS) attacks or 'booting'. These are attempts to make a computer, network or website unavailable by overwhelming it with internet traffic from multiple sources; and,
- Making, supplying or obtaining malware (malicious software) such as viruses, spyware, ransomware, botnets and Remote Access Trojans with the intent to commit further offence, including those above.

Children with particular skill and interest in computing and technology may inadvertently or deliberately stray into cyber-dependent crime. If there are concerns about a child in this area, the DSL (or a deputy), should consider referring into the Cyber Choices programme. This is a nationwide police programme supported by the Home Office and led by the National Crime Agency, working with regional and local policing. It aims to intervene where

young people are at risk of committing, or being drawn into, low level cyber-dependent offences and divert them to a more positive use of their skills and interests. Note that Cyber Choices does not currently cover 'cyber-enabled' crime.

Additional advice can be found at: **Cyber Choices**, and **National Cyber Security Centre - NCSC.GOV.UK**.

**Online Safety – New risks (misinformation, disinformation, conspiracy)**

KCSIE 2025 now treats misinformation, disinformation (including fake news), and conspiracy theories as formal categories of safeguarding risks under Online Sa

Generally accepted definitions:

- Misinformation: false/inaccurate information spread without intent to deceive.
- Disinformation: false/misleading information spread deliberately to deceive.
- Conspiracy theories: speculative narratives asserting secret plots by powerful groups without credible evidence.

Urban Exploring

Urban exploring, also known as urbex, is the exploration of man-made structures, particularly abandoned or derelict ones, often with a focus on photography and historical documentation. It involves venturing into places that are typically off-limits, sometimes requiring trespassing. While it can be a thrill and a way to explore, it is important to be aware of the potential risks, including safety hazards and legal consequences.

(Please refer to Annex B of KCSIE, 2025 for further information and links to resources and support).

**Appendix B**

**Section 34: Mental Health Definitions**

**All staff** should also be aware that **mental health problems** can, in some cases, be an indicator that a child has suffered or is at risk of suffering abuse, neglect or exploitation.

**Anxiety**

Anxiety problems can significantly affect a child's ability to develop, to learn or to maintain and sustain friendships.

Children and young people may feel anxious for several reasons – for example because of worries about things that are happening at home or at school, or because of a traumatic event. Symptoms of anxiety include feeling fearful or panicky, breathless, tense, fidgety, sick, irritable, tearful or having difficulty sleeping. If they become persistent or exaggerated, then specialist help, and support will be required.

Clinical professionals refer to several diagnostic categories:

Generalised anxiety disorder (GAD) – a long-term condition which causes people to feel anxious about a wide range of situations and issues, rather than one specific event.

Panic disorder – a condition in which people have recurring and regular panic attacks, often for no obvious reason.

Obsessive-Compulsive Disorder (OCD) – a mental health condition where a person has obsessive thoughts (unwanted, unpleasant thoughts, images or urges that repeatedly enter their mind, causing them anxiety) and compulsions (repetitive behaviour or mental acts that they feel they must carry out to try to prevent an obsession coming true).

Specific phobias – the excessive fear of an object or a situation, to the extent that it causes an anxious response, such as panic attack.

Separation Anxiety Disorder (SAD) – worry about being away from home or about being far away from parents/carers, at a level that is much more than normal for the child's age.

Social Phobia – intense fear of social or performance situations.

Agoraphobia – a fear of being in situations where escape might be difficult, or help wouldn't be available if things go wrong.

**Depression**

Feeling low or sad is a common feeling for children and adults, and a normal reaction to experiences that are stressful or upsetting. When these feelings dominate and interfere with a person's life, it can become an illness.

Depression can significantly affect a child's ability to develop, to learn or to maintain and sustain friendships.

Clinicians making a diagnosis of depression will generally use the categories major depressive disorder (MDD – where the person will show a number of depressive symptoms to the extent that they impair work, social or personal functioning) or dysthymic disorder (DD – less severe than MDD but characterised by a daily depressed mood for at least two years).

**Hyperkinetic Disorders -** (e.g., disturbance of activity and attention)

Although many children are inattentive, easily distracted or impulsive, in some children these behaviours are exaggerated and persistent, compared with other children of a similar age and stage of development. When these behaviours interfere with a child's family and social functioning and with progress at school, they become a matter for professional concern.

Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) is a diagnosis used by clinicians. It involves three characteristic types of behaviour – inattention, hyperactivity and impulsivity. Whereas some children show signs of all three types of behaviour (this is called 'combined type' ADHD), other children diagnosed show signs only of inattention or hyperactivity/impulsiveness.

Hyperkinetic disorder is another diagnosis used by clinicians. It is a more restrictive diagnosis but is broadly like severe combined type ADHD, in that signs of inattention, hyperactivity and impulsiveness must all be present. These core symptoms must also have been present before the age of seven and must be evident in two or more settings.

**Attachment disorders**

Attachment is the affectionate bond children have with special people in their lives that lead them to feel pleasure when they interact with them and be comforted by their nearness during times of stress. Researchers generally agree that there are four main factors that influence attachment security: opportunity to establish a close relationship with a primary caregiver; the quality of caregiving; the child's characteristics; and the family context. Secure attachment is an important protective factor for mental health later in childhood, while attachment insecurity is widely recognised as a risk factor for the development of behaviour problems.

**Eating disorders**

The most common eating disorders are anorexia nervosa and bulimia nervosa. Eating disorders can emerge when worries about weight begin to dominate a person's life or eating is used as a way of controlling emotions. Someone with anorexia nervosa may worry persistently about being fat and eats very little. They lose a lot of weight and if female, their periods may stop. Someone with bulimia nervosa also worries persistently about weight. They alternate between eating very little, and then binging. They vomit or take laxatives to control their weight. Both eating disorders affect girls and boys but are more common in girls.

**Deliberate self-harm**

Self-harm is a serious public health problem and is the reason behind many admissions to accident and emergency departments every year. Self-harm and suicidal threats by a child/young person put them at risk of significant harm and should always be taken seriously and responded to without delay.

Common examples of deliberate self-harm include 'overdosing' (self-poisoning), hitting, cutting or burning oneself, pulling hair or picking skin, or self-strangulation. The clinical definition includes attempted suicide, though some argue that self-harm only includes actions which are not intended to be fatal. It can be a coping mechanism, a way of inflicting punishment on oneself and a way of validating the self or influencing others.

Self-harming is NOT attention seeking behaviour, it is attention NEEDING behaviour.

The school will follow the Sutton Self-Harm protocol in responding to concerns about self-harm LSCP MANAGEMENT OF YOUNG PEOPLE WHO SELF-HARM OR HAVE SUICIDAL IDEATION (suttonlscp.org.uk)

**Post-traumatic stress**

If a child experiences or witnesses something deeply shocking or disturbing they may have a traumatic stress reaction. This is a normal way of dealing with shocking events and it may affect the way the child thinks, feels and behaves. If these symptoms and behaviours

persist, and the child is unable to come to terms with what has happened, then clinicians may make a diagnosis of post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD).

**Appendix C**

**Section 35: Sexual violence and sexual harassment**

**Section 39: Sexual violence and sexual harassment**

The school will follow the guidance in 'Keeping Children Safe in Education' (DfE, September 2023): Responding to reports of sexual violence and sexual harassment.

All school staff should be aware that students may not feel ready or know how to tell someone that they are being abused, exploited, or neglected, and/or they may not recognise their experiences as harmful. For example, they may feel embarrassed, humiliated, or being threatened. This could be due to their vulnerability, disability and/or sexual orientation or language barriers. This should not prevent staff from having a professional curiosity and speaking to the DSL if they have concerns about a child. It is also important that staff determine how best to build trusted relationships with children and young people which facilitate communication.

All school staff, but especially the designated safeguarding lead (and deputies) should consider whether children are at risk of abuse or exploitation in situations outside their families. Extra-familial harms take a variety of different forms and children can be vulnerable to multiple harms including (but not limited to) sexual abuse (including harassment and exploitation), domestic abuse in their own intimate relationships (teenage relationship abuse), criminal exploitation, serious youth violence, county lines, and radicalisation.

Sexual violence and sexual harassment can occur between two children of any sex. They can also occur through a group of children sexually assaulting or sexually harassing a single child or group of children.

Children who are victims of sexual violence and sexual harassment will likely find the experience stressful and distressing. This will, in all likelihood, adversely affect their educational attainment.

Sexual violence and sexual harassment exist on a continuum and may overlap, they can occur online and offline (both physical and verbal) and are never acceptable.

It is important to note that Children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities can be especially vulnerable. Disabled and deaf children are three times more likely to be abused than their peers.

It is important that all victims are taken seriously and offered appropriate support.

When there has been a report of sexual violence, the DSL (or a deputy) should make an immediate risk and needs assessment. Where there has been a report of sexual harassment, the need for a risk assessment should be considered on a case-by-case basis. Toolkits that will support the risk assessment process include: Brook: traffic light tool.

The DSL (or deputy) should make sure they are engaging with children's social care and specialist services as required. Where there has been a report of sexual violence, it is likely that professional risk assessments by social workers and or sexual violence specialists will be required.

**Support available if a child has been harmed, or is in immediate danger or at risk of harm**

If a child has been harmed, is in immediate danger or is at risk of harm, a referral will be made to the Children's First Contact Service.

**Support available if early help, section 17 and/or section 47 statutory assessments are appropriate**

If early help, section 17 and/or section 47 statutory assessments (assessments under the Children Act 1989) are appropriate, school staff may be required to support external agencies. The DSL and deputies will support staff as required.

**Support available if a crime may have been committed**

Rape, assault by penetration and sexual assaults are crimes. Where a report includes such an act, the police will be notified, often as a natural progression of making a referral to the Children's First Contact Service (CFCS). The DSL will be aware of the local process for referrals to both the Children's First Contact Service (CFCS) and the police.

Whilst the age of criminal responsibility is 10 years of age, if the alleged perpetrator is under 10, the principle of referring to the police remains. In these cases, the police will take a welfare approach rather than a criminal justice approach.

The school has a close relationship with the local police force and the DSL will liaise closely with the local police presence.

**Support available if reports include online behaviour**

Online concerns can be especially complicated. The school recognises that there is potential for an online incident to extend further than the local community and for a victim, or the alleged perpetrator, to become marginalised and excluded both online and offline. There is also strong potential for repeat victimisation if the content continues to exist.

If the incident involves sexual images or videos held online, the Internet Watch Foundation will be consulted to have the material removed.

Staff will not view or forward illegal images of a child. If they are made aware of such an image, they will contact the DSL. The DSL will seek advice (from CFCS or the police) before opening any material that has been flagged to them.

**Managing disclosures**

Victims will always be taken seriously, reassured, supported and kept safe. Victims will never be made to feel like they are causing a problem or made to feel ashamed.

If a friend of a victim makes a report or a member of staff overhears a conversation, staff will act – they will never assume that someone else will deal with it. The basic principles remain the same as when a victim reports an incident; however, staff will consider why the

victim has not chosen to make a report themselves and the discussion will be handled sensitively and with the help of CFCS where necessary. If staff are in any doubt, they will speak to the DSL.

Where an alleged incident took place away from the school or online but involved pupils from the school, the school's duty to safeguard pupils remains the same.

All staff will be trained to handle disclosures.

The DSL will be informed of any allegations of abuse against pupils with SEND. They will record the incident in writing and, working with the SENCO, decide what course of action is necessary, with the best interests of the pupil in mind at all times.

**Confidentiality**

The school will only engage staff and agencies required to support the victim and/or be involved in any investigation. If a victim asks the school not to tell anyone about the disclosure, the school cannot make this promise. Even without the victim's consent, the information may still be lawfully shared if it is in the public interest and protects children from harm.

**The DSL will consider the following when making confidentiality decisions:**

Parents will be informed unless it will place the victim at greater risk.

If a child is at risk of harm, is in immediate danger or has been harmed, a referral will be made to the Children's First Contact Service.

Rape, assault by penetration and sexual assaults are crimes – reports containing any such crimes will be passed to the police.

The DSL will weigh the victim's wishes against their duty to protect the victim and others. If a referral is made against the victim's wishes, it will be done so extremely carefully and the reasons for referral will be explained to the victim. Appropriate specialist support will always be offered.

**Anonymity**

There are legal requirements for anonymity where a case is progressing through the criminal justice system. The school will do all it can to protect the anonymity of children involved in any report of sexual violence or sexual harassment. It will carefully consider, based on the nature of the report, which staff will be informed and what support will be in place for the children involved.

When deciding on the steps to take, the school will consider the role of social media in potentially exposing victims' identities and facilitating the spread of rumours.

**Risk assessment**

The DSL or a deputy will make an immediate risk and needs assessment any time there is a report of sexual violence. For reports of sexual harassment, a risk assessment will be considered on a case-by-case basis. Risk assessments are not intended to replace the

detailed assessments of experts, and for incidents of sexual violence it is likely that a professional risk assessment by a social worker or sexual violence specialist will be required.

Risk assessments will consider:

- The victim.
- The alleged perpetrator.
- Other children at the school, especially any actions that are appropriate to protect them.

Risk assessments will be recorded (either on paper or electronically) and kept under review in accordance with the school's **Data Protection Policy**.

**Acting following a disclosure**

The DSL or a deputy will decide the school's initial response, taking into consideration:

- The victim's wishes.
- The nature of the incident.
- The ages and developmental stages of the children involved.
- Any power imbalance between the children.
- Whether the incident is a one-off or part of a pattern.
- Any ongoing risks.
- Any related issues and the wider context, such as whether there are wider environmental factors in a child's life that threaten their safety and/or welfare.
- The best interests of the child.

***DSLs will discuss incidents occurring in school and agree on a course of action. If there is any doubt as to the best course of action, external advice will be sought.***

Sexual violence and sexual harassment are always unacceptable and will not be tolerated.

Immediate consideration will be given as to how to support the victim, alleged perpetrator and any other children involved.

For reports of rape and assault by penetration, whilst the school establishes the facts, the alleged perpetrator will be removed from any classes shared with the victim. The school will consider how to keep the victim and alleged perpetrator apart on school premises and on transport where applicable. These actions will not be seen as a judgement of guilt on the alleged perpetrator.

For reports of sexual violence and sexual harassment, the proximity of the victim and alleged perpetrator and the suitability of shared classes, premises and transport will be considered immediately.

In all cases, the initial report will be carefully evaluated and the wishes of the victim, nature of the allegations and requirement to protect all children will be taken into consideration.

**Managing the report**

The decision of when to inform the alleged perpetrator of a report will be made on a case-by-case basis. If a report is being referred to the police, the school will speak to the relevant agency to discuss informing the alleged perpetrator.

There are four likely outcomes when managing reports of sexual violence or sexual harassment:

- Managing internally
- Providing early help
- Referring to CFCS
- Reporting to the police

Whatever outcome is chosen, it will be underpinned by the principle that sexual violence and sexual harassment is never acceptable and will not be tolerated. All concerns, discussion, decisions and reasons behind decisions will be recorded either on paper or electronically.

**The following situations are statutorily clear and do not allow for contrary decisions:**

A child under the age of 13 can never consent to sexual activity.

The age of consent is 16.

Sexual intercourse without consent is rape.

Rape, assault by penetration and sexual assault are defined in law.

Creating and sharing sexual photos and videos of children under 18 is illegal – including children making and sending images and videos of themselves.

**Managing internally**

In some cases, e.g., one-off incidents, the school may decide to handle the incident internally through behaviour and bullying policies and by providing pastoral support.

**Providing Early Help**

The school may decide that statutory interventions are not required, but that pupils may benefit from early help – providing support as soon as a problem emerges. This approach can be particularly useful in addressing non-violent harmful sexual behaviour and may prevent escalation of sexual violence.

Harmful sexual behaviour framework: an evidence-informed operational framework for children and young people displaying harmful sexual behaviours (suttonlscp.org.uk)

**Referral to CFCS**

If a child has been harmed, is at risk of harm or is in immediate danger, the school will make a referral to the Children's First Contact Service (CFCS). Parents will be informed unless there is a compelling reason not to do so (if referral will place the victim at risk). This decision will be made in consultation with the Children's First Contact Service (CFCS).

The school will not wait for the outcome of an investigation before protecting the victim and other children.

The DSL will work closely with the Children's First Contact Service (CFCS) to make sure that the school's actions do not jeopardise any investigation. Any related risk assessment will be used to inform all decisions.

If the Children's First Contact Service (CFCS) decide that a statutory investigation is not appropriate, the school will consider referring the incident again if they believe the child to be in immediate danger or at risk of harm.

If the school agrees with the decision made by the Children's First Contact Service (CFCS) they will consider the use of other support mechanisms such as early help, pastoral support and specialist support.

**Reporting to the police**

Reports of rape, assault by penetration or sexual assault will be passed on to the police – even if the alleged perpetrator is under 10 years of age. Generally, this will be in parallel with referral to the Children's First Contact Service (CFCS). The DSL and deputies will follow the local process for referral.

Parents will be informed unless there is a compelling reason not to do so. Where parents are not informed, it is essential for the school to support the child with any decision they take, in unison with the Children's First Contact Service (CFCS) and any appropriate specialist agencies.

The DSL and **governing board** will agree what information will be disclosed to staff and others, in particular the alleged perpetrator and their parents. They will also discuss the best way to protect the victim and their anonymity.

The DSL will be aware of local arrangements and specialist units that investigate child abuse.

In some cases, it may become clear that the police will not take further action, for whatever reason. In these circumstances, the school will continue to engage with specialist support for the victim as required.

**Bail conditions**

Police bail is only used in exceptional circumstances. It is unlikely that a child will be placed on police bail if alternative measures can be used to mitigate risks.

The school will work with the Children's First Contact Service (CFCS) and the police to support the victim, alleged perpetrator and other children (especially witnesses) during criminal investigations. The school will seek advice from the police to make sure they meet their safeguarding responsibilities.

The term 'released under investigation' (RUI) is used to describe alleged perpetrators released in circumstances that do not warrant the application of bail.

Where bail is deemed necessary, the school will work with the Children's First Contact Service (CFCS) and the police to safeguard children – ensuring that the victim can continue in their normal routine and continue to receive a suitable education.

**Managing delays in the criminal justice system**

The school will not wait for the outcome (or even the start) of criminal proceedings before protecting the victim, alleged perpetrator and other children. The associated risk assessment will be used to inform any decisions made.

The DSL will work closely with the police to make sure the school does not jeopardise any criminal proceedings, and to obtain help and support as necessary.

**The end of the criminal process**

Risk assessments will be updated if the alleged perpetrator receives a caution or is convicted. If the perpetrator remains in the same school as the victim, the school will set out clear expectations regarding the perpetrator, including their behaviour and any restrictions deemed reasonable and proportionate with regards to the perpetrator's timetable.

The school will make sure that the victim and perpetrator remain protected from bullying and harassment (including online).

Where an alleged perpetrator is found not guilty or a case is classed as requiring "no further action", the school will offer support to the victim and alleged perpetrator for as long as is necessary. The victim is likely to be traumatised and the fact that an allegation cannot be substantiated does not necessarily mean that it was unfounded. The school will discuss decisions with the victim and offer support.

The alleged perpetrator is also likely to require ongoing support, as they have also been through a difficult and upsetting experience.

**Ongoing support for the victim**

Any decisions regarding safeguarding and supporting the victim will be made with the following considerations in mind:

- The terminology the school uses to describe the victim
- The age and developmental stage of the victim
- The needs and wishes of the victim
- Whether the victim wishes to continue in their normal routine
- The victim will not be made to feel ashamed about making a report
- What a proportionate response looks like

- Victims may not disclose the whole picture immediately and they may be more comfortable talking about the incident on a piecemeal basis; therefore, a dialogue will be kept open and the victim can choose to appoint a designated trusted adult.
- Victims may struggle in a normal classroom environment. Whilst it is important not to isolate the victim, the victim may wish to be withdrawn from lessons and activities at times. This will only happen when the victim wants it to, not because it makes it easier to manage the situation.

The school will provide a physical space for victims to withdraw to.

Victims may require support for a long period of time and the school will be prepared to offer long-term support in liaison with relevant agencies.

Everything possible will be done to prevent the victim from bullying and harassment as a result of any report they have made.

If the victim is unable to remain in the school, alternative provision or a move to another school will be considered – this will only be considered at the request of the victim and following discussion with their parents.

If the victim does move to another school, the DSL will inform the school of any ongoing support needs and transfer the child protection file.

**Ongoing support for the alleged perpetrator**

When considering the support required for an alleged perpetrator, the school will consider:

The terminology they use to describe the alleged perpetrator or perpetrator.

The balance of safeguarding the victim and providing the alleged perpetrator with education and support.

The reasons why the alleged perpetrator may have abused the victim – and the support necessary.

Their age and developmental stage.

What a proportionate response looks like.

Whether the behaviour is a symptom of their own abuse or exposure to abusive practices and/or materials.

When making a decision, advice will be taken from CSCS, specialist sexual violence services and the police as appropriate.

If the alleged perpetrator moves to another school (for any reason), the DSL will inform the destination school of any ongoing support needs and transfer the child protection file.

The school will work with professionals as required to understand why the abuse took place and provide a high level of support to help the pupil understand and overcome the reasons for their behaviour and reduce the likelihood of them abusing again.

**Disciplining the alleged perpetrator**

Disciplinary action can be taken whilst investigations are ongoing and the fact that investigations are ongoing does not prevent the school reaching its own conclusion and imposing an appropriate penalty.

The school will make such decisions on a case-by-case basis, with the DSL taking a leading role. The school will take into consideration whether any action would prejudice an investigation and/or subsequent prosecution. The police and CSCS will be consulted where necessary.

The school will also consider whether circumstances make it unreasonable or irrational for the school to decide about what happened while an investigation is considering the same facts.

Disciplinary action and support can take place at the same time.

The school will be clear whether action taken is disciplinary, supportive or both.

Once the DSL has decided to progress a report, they will again consider whether the victim and alleged perpetrator will be separated in classes, on school premises and on school transport – balancing the school's duty to educate against its duty to safeguard. The best interests of the pupil will always come first.

Where there is a criminal investigation into rape or assault by penetration, the alleged perpetrator will be removed from classes with the victim and potential contact on school premises and transport will be prevented.

Where a criminal investigation into rape or assault by penetration leads to a conviction or caution, in all but the most exceptional circumstances, this will constitute a serious breach of discipline and result in the view that allowing the perpetrator to remain in the school would harm the education or welfare of the victim and potentially other pupils.

Where a criminal investigation into sexual assault leads to a conviction or caution, the school will consider suitable sanctions and permanent exclusion. If the perpetrator will remain at the school, the school will keep the victim and perpetrator in separate classes and manage potential contact on school premises and transport. The nature of the conviction or caution, alongside the wishes of the victim, will inform any discussions made.

Where a report of sexual assault does not lead to a police investigation, this does not mean that the offence did not happen or that the victim has lied. Both the victim and alleged perpetrator will be affected, and appropriate support will be provided. Considerations regarding sharing classes and potential contact will be made on a case-by-case basis.

In all cases, the school will record its decisions and be able to justify them. The needs and wishes of the victim will always be at the heart of the process.

**Working with parents and carers**

In most sexual violence cases, the school will work with the parents of both the victim and alleged perpetrator. For cases of sexual harassment, these decisions will be made on a case-by-case basis.

The school will meet the victim's parents with the victim present to discuss the arrangements being put in place to safeguard the victim, and to understand their wishes in terms of support arrangements and the progression of the report.

Schools will also meet with the parents of the alleged perpetrator to discuss arrangements that will impact their child, such as moving them out of classes with the victim. Reasons behind decisions will be explained and the support being made available will be discussed. The DSL or a deputy will attend such meetings, with agencies invited as necessary.

Clear policies regarding how the school will handle reports of sexual violence and how victims and alleged perpetrators will be supported will be made available to parents.

**Safeguarding other children**

Children who have witnessed sexual violence, especially rape and assault by penetration, will be provided with support.

It is likely that children will "take sides" following a report and the school will do everything in its power to protect the victim, alleged perpetrator and witnesses from bullying and harassment.

The school will keep in mind that contact may be made between the victim and alleged perpetrator and that harassment from friends of both parties could take place via social media and do everything in its power to prevent such activity.

As part of the school's risk assessment following a report, transport arrangements will be considered, as it is a potentially vulnerable place for both a victim and alleged perpetrator. Schools will consider any additional support that can be put in place.

**What to do if you are informed that a parent is on the sex offenders register**

In this situation the Head Teacher will be guided by parole conditions where relevant to keep children safe in school. This information must be treated as strictly confidential and will only be shared with the DSL if appropriate.

**Please refer to Sexual violence and sexual harassment between children in schools and college – September 2021 for more information.**

Sexual violence and sexual harassment between children in schools and colleges (publishing.service.gov.uk)

**Appendix D**

**Section 36: Designated Staff Information**

| **Key Personnel** |
|---|
| **The DSL for Child Protection is: Emma Rix** |
| **The deputy designated leads are:** |
| **Lee Webster, Gary Kench & Karis Parker** |
| Contact details: dsl@robinhood-junior.org.uk/ 0208 642 4292 |
| **The nominated child protection governor is**: LESLEY STEERS - Contact details: 0208 642 4292 |
| Filterning & Monitoring Governor is: Stanka Silva |
| **Designated Teacher for CLA & C Post LA** –Emma Rix |
| **Designated Governor for CLA & C Post LA** - Donna Foster |
| **Prevent Lead**: Lee Webster(HT) |

**Appendix E - Section 37: Key Contacts**

**Sutton**

- Children's First Contact Service (CFCS) – 020 8770 6001

childrensfirstcontactservice@sutton.gov.uk

- Social Care - Out of Hours – Emergency Duty Team – 0208 770 5000 x9
- Sutton Local Safeguarding Children's Partnership: 020 8770 4879

suttonlscp@sutton.gov.uk

Website: www.suttonlscp.org.uk

- Sutton LA LADO (Local Authority Designated Officer – complaints against staff) –

0208 770 4776 (LADO@sutton.gov.uk)

For escalation procedures, please click on the link below:

Sutton Local Safeguarding Children Partnership - LSCP Policy & Practice (suttonlscp.org.uk)

Escalation Process – Cognus

For the Sutton CFCS Operating Protocol which includes guidance on what to do in relation to a serious incident or child death, please click on the link below:

Sutton Local Safeguarding Children Partnership - LSCP Protocols

**General Contacts:**

- Ofsted 0300 123 1231
- Ofsted whistle blowing line – 0300 123 3155
- Police 999
- NSPCC 0808 8005000
- NSPCC whistle blowing helpline number – 0800 028 0285
- ChildLine 0800 11 11

**Appendix F**

**Section 38: In the event of an extended school closure due to exceptional circumstances**

The way in which the school can operate in response to an extended school closure due to exceptional circumstances is fundamentally different to 'business as usual'. However, a number of important safeguarding principles will remain the same:

- the best interests of children must always continue to come first
- if anyone in a school has a safeguarding concern about any child they should continue to act and act immediately
- a DSL or deputy should be available
- it is essential that unsuitable people are not allowed to enter the children's workforce and/or gain access to children
- children should continue to be protected when they are online

This means that the school will continue to implement these Child Protection Policy and Procedures as we have always done.

We will also be mindful that an extended school closure will impact on our interaction with students.

As when the school is open, safeguarding concerns must be reported immediately - verbally in the first instance and then followed up with an e-mail. Do not assume that sending an e-mail means it has been read.

Staff will only use agreed platforms and work e-mail addresses to communicate with students (in line with the school's Remote Learning Policy). Any communications must be professional. Staff will continue to follow the school's Staff ICT Acceptable Use Agreement. In practice, this means:

- If you are on camera, you must be appropriately dressed, and in an appropriate area against a neutral background (no personal information should be seen). Staff should not be seen on camera from a bedroom. There should be no confidential items on display. Please note use of cameras for live lessons should be kept to a minimum.
- Language must be professional and appropriate, including any of your family members in the background.
- Be mindful of who else may be in the background or listening to the lesson in the student's home.
- Lessons must be set in line with the school timetable – and any contact with students should be during school hours unless this has been otherwise agreed with SLT.
- If students are not fully dressed, they should be removed from the lesson.
- There should be no 1:1 remote meetings with students – without prior agreement of the Headteacher or DSL.
- When presenting to the class, take care to ensure you only share information appropriate to the lesson – particularly if you have other screens open simultaneously.
- Live lessons should ***not*** be recorded.
- Any breaches should be reported to the Headteacher or DSL immediately.

This also has implications for students accessing the learning as well. In particular:

- Only use Google Classroom and work e-mail addresses to communicate with staff.
- If you are on camera, you must be appropriately dressed. If not, you will be removed from the lesson.
- Language must be appropriate, including any of your family members in the background.
- Live lessons should ***not*** be recorded or shared in any way.

In the event of an extended school closure due to exceptional circumstances, the school will:

- Follow any national and local statutory guidance and advice
- Communicate with parents and carers on a regular basis ensure that they are signposted to appropriate support and advice
- Communicate with students and ensure that they are signposted to appropriate support and advice